

# **Sri Lankan, Low-Country, Ritual Drumming: The Raigama Tradition**

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## Abstract

This thesis provides an in-depth account of the Low-Country, ritual, drumming tradition of Sri Lanka. Low-Country drumming is characterized by its expressive and illusive sense of timing which makes it appear to be free of beat, pulse and metre. This makes it special in respect to other drumming cultures of the world. However, the drumming of the Low-Country is marginalized, unaccepted and unexposed. Drawing on original fieldwork from the Western province of Sri Lanka, this study analyses the drumming of three distinct rituals: *devol maḍuva*, *Kalu Kumāra samayama* and *graha pūjāva* of Raigama, the dominant sub-tradition of the Low-Country. The thesis reveals key features of the drumming tradition, some of which are hidden. These features include the musical structure that is beneath the surface of the drumming, timing, embellishment, improvisation and performance practice. It also documents the Low-Country drum, the *yak beraya*, its construction and relationship to the musician. The thesis addresses some of the changes that are occurring in the contemporary ritual and argues the need for the drumming to be brought out of its ritual context, for its survival in the future. It also documents a collaborative performance between Low-Country ritual performers and musicians from New Zealand.

## **Acknowledgements**

My interests in Sri Lankan traditional drumming were initially kindled through my studies of jazz drumming. After studying jazz drumming for several years, I naturally developed an interest in the drumming music of my own culture. With little idea of the scope of the research area, I first enrolled in my doctoral programme with an intention to study the three traditions of Sri Lankan drumming. However, soon after, I realized the depth of the Low-Country tradition and I was mesmerized by its characteristics.

I am most deeply grateful for the inspiring musician who guided me and provided me invaluable information to write this thesis: the late Sandhoris Jayantha. In my view, he should be remembered as the father of Sri Lankan Low-Country drumming. Jayantha's virtuosic skill, humble personality and sheer dedication for drumming were some aspects that inspired me the most. I deeply regret the fact that he did not live to see the completion of this thesis. However, in appreciation for the support he extended, I wish to dedicate this work to him. I am also indebted to his family members, with whom I have established close relationships over the past few years. His wife and his sister never failed to offer me several cups of tea within any given afternoon, during my frequent visits to their residence. Many other musicians in Sri Lanka helped me with this study. Prasantha Rupathilaka, with whom I have established a close friendship, and who has spent several hundreds of hours answering my questions, making sure I have understood the drumming improvisations, and notated the drumming patterns correctly. I am also indebted to Prasantha's father Daniel and his brother Susantha. In my view, the combination of these three artists currently displays the Low-Country performance to the highest level. I wish

to express my gratitude for their willingness to share their intuitive knowledge of ritual performance and to dedicate many hours for rehearsals during the collaboration project. I am also thankful for the New Zealand musicians Misha Marks, Reuben Derrick and Isaac Smith who took part in the collaboration. Many musicians, whom I wish to thank, allowed me to record their performances during this study. Among others, I would like to thank Piyasara Shilpadhipathi for initially facilitating the meetings with my informants and Gayanath Dahanayaka for extending his support at times I was in Sri Lanka.

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## System of Transliteration

Sinhala terms used in this thesis are transliterated using the table given below.<sup>1</sup> Proper nouns, except for gods, mythical cities and people in mythical stories, are spelt as they are in common usage today, i.e., without macrons.

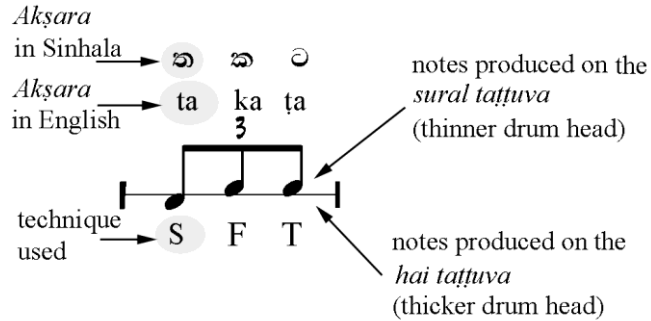
අ	a	ක	ka	ධ	dha
ආ	ā	ඛ	kha	න	na
ඇ	ä	ග	ga	ඳ	ñda
ඈ	ā	ඝ	gha	ප	pa
ඉ	i	ඟ	ṅga	ඵ	pha
ඊ	ī	ච	ca	බ	ba
උ	u	ඡ	cha	භ	bha
ඌ	ū	ඣ	jha	ම	ma
ඹ	ṛ	ට	ṭ	ඹ	m̐ba
ඹඹ	ṝ	ඨ	tha	ය	ya
එ	e	ඩ	ḍ	ර	ra
ඒ	ē	ඪ	ḍha	ල	la
ඒඑ	ai	ණ	ṇa	ව	va
ඔ	o	ඬ	ṇḍa	ඞ	śa
ඔඔ	ō	ත	ta	ශ	śa
ඔඹ	au	ථ	tha	ස	sa
(අ) ො	m̐	ද	da	හ	ha

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<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm Geiger, ed., *A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language*, vol. 1 (Colombo: The Royal Asiatic Society Ceylon Branch, 1935) i.

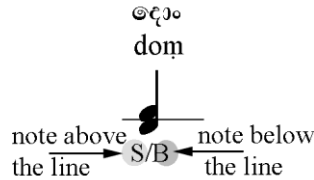
## Key to Musical Transcriptions

The following transcription key illustrates the system of notation used throughout this thesis.



The stave used for the transcriptions is a single-line percussion stave. The drum syllables (*akṣara*) of the drumming patterns are included in both Sinhala and English characters, on top of the staff. The drumming techniques used to produce each syllable (introduced in Chapter 3), are noted below the staff. The techniques are symbolized by a number of characters. 'S' represents a slap stroke, 'M' represents a muffled stroke, 'B' represents a bass stroke and 'F T' represents a series of two strokes identified as the flick-thumb technique. The two membranes of the Low-Country drum are known as the *sural taṭṭuva* (thinner drumhead) and the *hai taṭṭuva* (thicker drumhead). Normally, drummers use their natural hand to play the *sural taṭṭuva*, although, there are no strict rules that mention which hand should be used on each side of the drum. Therefore, the syllables of the drumming patterns are more directly associated with the sides of the drum compared to the musician's hands. In the transcriptions, the strokes played on the *sural taṭṭuva* are notated above the line and the strokes played on the *hai taṭṭuva* are notated below the line.

The technique symbols of *akṣara*, produced with strokes played on both sides of the drum, in unison, will be separated with a “/”. The first character represents the note produced on the *sural taṭṭuva* which is above the line. The second character represents the note produced on the *hai taṭṭuva* which is below the line.



*Akṣara*, consisting of two sounds produced immediately after each other with no significant metrical duration in between, will be represented with a smaller note slurred to a note of normal size.



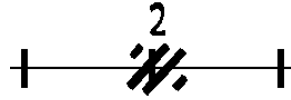
The characters ‘FTB’ when presented collectively represent a drum roll, which is generated from the combination of bass and flick-thumb strokes.



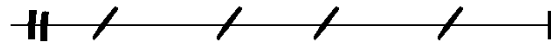
In the transcriptions, metronomic markings are limited to short repetitive drumming patterns and patterns with a regular beat. Even in these instances, the markings only intend to provide an approximate representation of the speed. Subtle shifts in tempo occur frequently in Low-Country drumming and this makes it difficult to accurately note the tempo. Transcriptions of patterns that include sections played at the slower tempos

(known as the *bara* tempo) and the solo drumming patterns do not include any metronome markings or time signatures. The crotchet beat of *bara* patterns are notated at roughly 40 beats per minute. However, the irregular nature of the beats in *bara* patterns makes these transcriptions extremely difficult to be notated accurately. The bar lines in these transcriptions intend to separate the stronger accentuated beats of the pattern. Some examples of these patterns are *yahan dākma* (section A), *kavi tāla*, *kālapañdam padē*, *magul bera*, *pūjā bera*, transition pattern-A and transition pattern-B.

Dynamics markings are limited to transcriptions in Chapter 6, since the drumming of the rituals in Chapters 4 and 5 consist of relatively constant dynamics. In Chapter 6, the transcription of *bali* pattern-A uses the following symbol to represent the repeat of two consecutive bars.



Also in Chapter 6, in the analysis of improvisation of *bali* pattern-B, bars which represent the drumming of the basic pattern, are notated as follows.



## Introduction

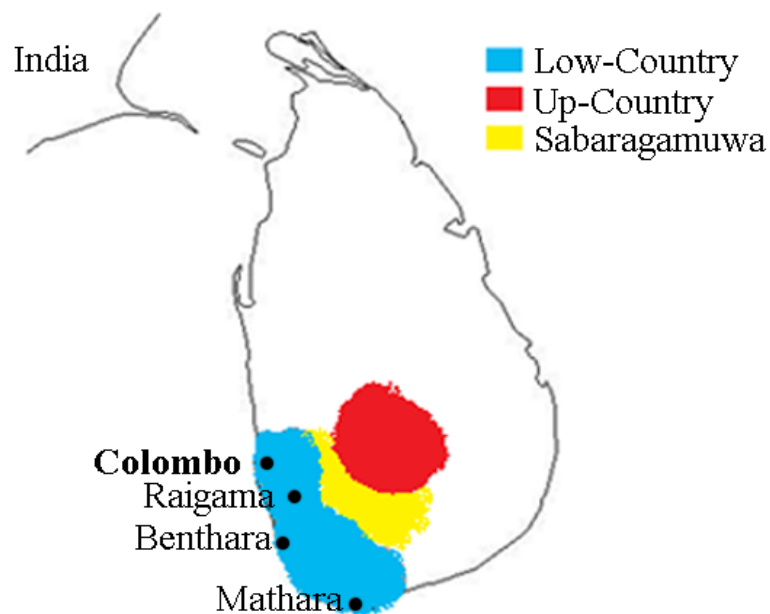
Sri Lanka, an island of 65,610 square kilometres in area and located off the southern tip of India, is home to several music genres and performance practices. The music of the Sinhala people, who constitute roughly 73 percent of the population of around 20 million, includes what is identified as the ‘traditional music’ of Sri Lanka. This traditional music consists of three performance elements: drumming, dancing and singing. Within this traditional music, three distinct traditions are identified as ‘Up-Country’ (Kandyan or *uḍa raṭa*), ‘Low-Country’ (*pahata raṭa*) and ‘Sabaragamuwa’, according to their geographical terrains. The Up-Country originates from the central hill areas of Sri Lanka and is recognized as having substantial influence from South India.<sup>2</sup> The Low-Country geographically represents the Southern and Western provinces, and is considered to be highly expressive in nature. This expressive nature often makes Low-Country drumming appear to be free of any pulse, beat or metre for the untrained ear. Sabaragamuwa is named after a province that is in the central region between the Low-Country and Up-Country, and is considered to be the oldest form of drumming. The three traditions have their own identifying instruments: the *gāṭa beraya* (*beraya* means drum) which represents the Up-Country tradition, the *yak beraya* which represents the Low-Country, and the *davula* which represents the Sabaragamuwa tradition. Another drum called the *tammāṭṭama* is not associated with a particular tradition, and is used commonly in all three regions.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sarath Wijewardana, *Sinhala Tit Tāla Kramaya* [The Tit Metric System of the Sinhala] (Colombo: Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 1994) 30.

<sup>3</sup> These instruments are explored in Chapter 2.

This study focuses on the Low-Country tradition, in which three sub-traditions are recognized as hailing from three settlements known as Raigama, Benthara and Mathara (figure 1). The separate sub-traditions of drumming are often indistinguishable for the novice listener. However, subtle, distinctive qualities exist among these schools and this justifies why the practitioners of the Low-Country differentiate each style. The townships of Mathara and Raigama are geographically most distant. Hence, the drumming from these two areas is stylistically most contrasting. The style of the Benthara sub-tradition also reflects the township's geographical placement between Mathara and Raigama, as it shows influences from both these other sub-traditions. Its proximity to Raigama is reflected in the sounds which are closer to the Raigama drumming. This Raigama style of playing, the focus of this thesis, is currently the most popular among the Low-Country artists. This is both due to the clarity of its drumming techniques and the region bordering the island's capital Colombo, which is currently home to most of the Low-Country artists.



**Figure 1: Map of Sri Lanka and the regions of traditional music**

It is the highly expressive nature of the Low-Country drumming that gives it its identity. The term ‘expression’ in this study, is interpreted with respect to characteristics of musical performance, rather than conveying emotional qualities, which are more often associated with the term. Wirz’s description of the drumming describes one aspect of its expressive nature: "Quicker and quicker the rolling of the drums sound, announcing the beginning of the dance." <sup>4</sup> Samarasinghe describes the loud dynamics of drumming in the ritual: “On certain occasions the hymns could not be heard clearly as the singing is drowned by the drumming.”<sup>5</sup> He further describes the “deep and rhythmic beat of the drum.”<sup>6</sup> The characteristics of Low-Country drumming, which create its expressive nature, will be explored with regards to rhythmic nuances created by both an irregular pulse and irregular beats, often simultaneous, the use of acceleration, dynamics, embellishment and improvisation. In addition to exploring the expressive nature, this study also aims to explore the compositional structures of drumming patterns and reveals the connection between the drumming and the other two performance elements of the tradition i.e., singing and dancing. Other objectives of this study include:

- Elucidating a theory of Low-Country drumming in its own terms.
- Exploring the instrument and the instrument making process.
- Creating a comprehensive collection of patterns in the Low-Country drumming repertoire.
- Revealing any hidden aspects of the Low-Country drumming tradition.
- Identifying the trends in contemporary performance contexts.

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<sup>4</sup> Paul Wirz, *Exorcism and the Art of Healing in Ceylon* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954) 68.

<sup>5</sup> S. G. Samarasinghe, "A Methodology for the Collection of the Sinhala Ritual," *Asian Folklore Studies* 36.2 (1977) 115.

<sup>6</sup> Samarasinghe, 120.

- Ensuring the survival of Low-Country drumming in the future.

The traditional music of Sri Lanka is perceived to be a national heritage. In reality, the music and its musicians are a marginalized sector of society. In the past, the musicians were marginalized under the caste system.<sup>7</sup> As noted by Simpson: “The hereditary occupation of drumming is said by many Sinhalese to be the main reason why the *Berava* [the caste to which the drummers traditionally belong] have in the past been treated with considerable odium and have been socially and economically marginalised.”<sup>8</sup> Laade also confirms this general low regard in which traditional music is held.<sup>9</sup> Even though the caste system holds little prominence in contemporary society, the free nature of the Low-Country drumming makes it inaccessible for the general public who often regard it as incomprehensible. However, from a musical viewpoint, it is this free, expressive nature which makes the drumming most interesting and hence its need to be studied.

The expressive nature of the drumming has made it difficult to formulate a theory of Low-Country drumming. This also has contributed towards the drumming being unaccepted as a legitimate genre of music. In order to legitimize the drumming, it is necessary to present a theory of the drumming in its own terms. Details on the *yak beraya*, the tradition’s main instrument, and its construction process will provide valuable background for presenting such a theory. A comprehensive collection of the drumming

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<sup>7</sup> For a detailed account of the caste system, refer to: Bryce Ryan, *Caste in Modern Ceylon: The Sinhalese System in Transition* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1953).

<sup>8</sup> Bob Simpson, "Possession, Dispossession and the Social Distribution of Knowledge Among Sri Lankan Ritual Specialists," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3.1 (1997) 4.

<sup>9</sup> Wolfgang Laade, "The Influence of Buddhism on the Sinhalese Music of Sri Lanka," *Asian Music* 25.1/2 (1993) 62.



patterns does not exist as it is primarily an oral tradition. Such a collection would undoubtedly contribute towards the preservation of the music. Also, because Low-Country drumming is an oral tradition, it consists of many characteristics that remain unidentified and hidden. The older, experienced artists of the Low-Country contain a wealth of wisdom and knowledge, as a result of their extensive dedication to learning and performance. Comparatively today, students have considerably less time to dedicate to learning the art form. Therefore, it is imperative that the hidden aspects of the drumming are revealed in order to ensure its survival. Such a study requires both an inside and outside view of the tradition.

The ritual is the original performance context of Low-Country drumming and it is the most suitable context in which to place this study. However, it has been observed that the traditional form of ritual is facing extinction. Although newer adaptations of the traditional ritual are becoming popular, these versions do not accommodate the performance aspects of the Low-Country tradition as effectively as does the traditional ritual. This means that these performance aspects, including the drumming, need to be brought into a contemporary context, outside of the ritual, if they are to survive in the future. Consequently, this thesis is extended to include the documentation of a collaborative performance within such a contemporary context.

Low-Country drumming remains a relatively untouched area of ethnomusicological study. As confirmed by a number of scholars, there is a noticeable lack of previous research carried out in this particular area of Sri Lankan music. As Seneviratna stated,

“the complex, but rhythmic drum beats of the ritual itself speak the rich musical heritage of the country to which little or no attention has hitherto been drawn by the scholar for serious study.”<sup>10</sup> More recently, Sheeran stated that “Drumming in Sri Lanka also remains a topic of further research.”<sup>11</sup> Claus-Bachmann’s statement, “there is much valuable work still to be done on ... regional forms of expression such as the Sabaragamuwa tradition, or the culture of low-country Sri Lanka”<sup>12</sup> also reconfirms the lack of research carried out, to date, on this area. The original performance context of the drumming (i.e., the Low-Country ritual) has been studied by several scholars writing in English,<sup>13</sup> however all these studies take an anthropological perspective. Similar studies have been carried out by scholars writing in Sinhala.<sup>14</sup> Karunaratna Bandara<sup>15</sup> and Sugathadasa Malalgoda<sup>16</sup> have written on the subject of Low-Country drumming, although these works concerned cannot be considered scholarly research, due to the lack of detail, depth and analytical perspective. Published field recordings in the area of Low-Country rituals also remain minimal.<sup>17</sup> Short segments of ritual drumming appear in

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<sup>10</sup> Anuradha Seneviratna, "Pañcatūrya Nāda and the Hēwisi Pūjā," *Ethnomusicology* 23.1 (1979) 56.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Sheeran, "Sri Lanka," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie, 2 ed., vol. 24 (London: Macmillan, 2001) 229-32.

<sup>12</sup> Martina Claus-Bachmann and Paul Green, "Women and Music in Sri Lanka," *The World of Music* 3 (2004) 12.

<sup>13</sup> Bruce Kapferer, *A Celebration of Demons: Exorcism and the Aesthetics of Healing in Sri Lanka* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

D. A. Premakumara de Silva, *Globalization and the Transformation of Planetary Rituals in Southern Sri Lanka* (Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 2000).

Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Cult of the Goddess Pattinni* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

<sup>14</sup> Tissa Kariyawasam, *Bali Yāga Pilivela [Content of the Bali Ritual]* (Colombo: Samayawardhana Publishers, 1986).

Jayasena Kottegoda, *Pahataraṭa Śāntikarma Sāhitya [History of Low-Country Rituals]* (Colombo: Published by the author, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Karunaratna Bandara, *Pahataraṭa Bera Vādana Sampradāya [The Low-Country Drumming Tradition]* (Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> Sugathadasa Malalgoda, *Yak Beraya* (Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> Two compact discs entitled “Ceylon’s Drum Masters and Healers” and “Sri Lanka: Ceylan [sic]” are the only recent published material sourced by the author.

promotional material and recordings aimed at tourists.<sup>18</sup> However, these performances of music are condensed drastically and are unsuitable to be considered in this study. One notable recording appears as part of an anthology of South-East Asian Music on *kolam*, a masked play of the Low-Country.<sup>19</sup>

Currently, the internet serves as a primary medium of communication that facilitates networking between ethnomusicologists around the world. However, due to a number of its drawbacks,<sup>20</sup> fieldwork remains essential to contemporary ethnomusicological research. Nettl emphasizes that fieldwork in ethnomusicology is essential: “principally ethnomusicology is the study with the use of fieldwork.”<sup>21</sup> He further mentions why researchers have to rely considerably on their own experiences and instincts to choose the most suitable approaches while in the field: “it is also the most personal part of the job, the part that cannot really be taught, that all of us have had to learn on our own, finding ways of mediation between our own personalities with their strengths and weaknesses and the individuals who’s shared belief we will learn and interpret, using confidence and mastering timidity.”<sup>22</sup> Fieldwork of this study was undertaken over a period of three years from 2006 to 2009 in Sri Lanka. In the first two years, it was carried out from April to September. In 2008 it was from July to December and in 2009 it was for one month in April. During the fieldwork I resided in my home town of Maharagama, which is located near the outskirts of the capital Colombo. Maharagama is also close to the suburbs of

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<sup>18</sup> N.a., *Sri Lankan Traditional Drums*. CD. Air Lanka. No number.

<sup>19</sup> Cyril de Silva Kulatilaka, *An Anthology of South - East Asian Music, Sri Lanka, Kolam - the Masked Play*, LP, Barenreiter Musicaphon, BM 30 SL 2569.

<sup>20</sup> Suzel Ana Reily, "Ethnomusicology and the Internet" *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 35 (2003) 187.

<sup>21</sup> Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005) 13.

<sup>22</sup> Nettl, 136.

Pannipitiya and Hokandara, where my informants are based. My fluent speaking and literary skills in Sinhala allowed me to communicate with my informants with ease and explore the Sinhala literature available on the area of Low-Country drumming. The following paragraphs describe the main approaches taken during the three, fieldwork periods.

“Establishing a close relationship with a master musician is a common and successful approach in ethnomusicology”<sup>23</sup> therefore this study uses a similar approach. When I first arrived in the field, I only had one close contact in the area of traditional drumming in Sri Lanka, who was Piyasara Shilpadhipathi, a renowned Up-Country drummer and a senior lecturer at the University of Performing Arts in Colombo. From prior association with Shilpadhipathi in both professional and learning environments, it was established that he could direct me to several masters of traditional drumming with whom I could potentially carry out this study. On arriving in the field, I was introduced to two distinguished traditional artists, Sandhoris Jayantha from the Low-Country and M.K Babanis from Sabaragamuwa. My interest in the Low-Country drumming led me to establish a close relationship with Sandhoris Jayantha (1930-2008). Fieldworkers are expected to show respect to the informants and teachers with whom they study, and the teachers sense sharply whether this respect is there.<sup>24</sup> During my initial meeting with Jayantha, he recognized my genuine intention to study the drumming. Perhaps being introduced to him through his nephew, Prasantha Rupathileke, whom Jayantha had also considered to be his finest student, further convinced him of my genuine intentions and respect for the art.

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<sup>23</sup> Helen Myers, ed., *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 31.

<sup>24</sup> Myers, 148.

This initial meeting did not include any playing or demonstrations. After some time of casual conversation, which mainly involved us introducing each other, I asked him about the different types of drumming patterns. As he explained a number of different types he sensed that I was able to easily identify the beat cycles of some of the patterns. Towards the end of this discussion, he had grown to appreciate my rhythmic knowledge. As a result of this, he was enthusiastic to share his knowledge of Low-Country drumming. At the time, Jayantha, 76 years of age, had established himself as the most respected senior Low-Country drummer in the field. Having retired from regular performance, he spent most of his time at home and was regularly visited by local students approaching him for lessons and study. At the conclusion of my initial meeting with Sandhoris Jayantha, he agreed to take part as the consultant of my study.

The close association I established with Jayantha proved to be invaluable as he was vastly experienced and had an intimate knowledge of the rituals. Being born into a family lineage of Low-Country artists in Raigama, Jayantha was exposed to ritual performances from an early age. At the age of six, he was placed under the care of his uncle, Nandhoris Fernando, to learn Low-Country drumming. From around the age of fifteen, Jayantha started playing in rituals and quickly established himself as a highly sought-after drummer in the region. Soon his talents were recognized on a national level and in 1964, he was invited to be in the advisory board of the *Lanka Kalā Mandalaya* (Arts Committee of Sri Lanka) for Low-Country drumming and dance. In the years which followed, from 1965 to 1969, he also participated in cultural performance tours to England, United States, Australia and New Zealand. In 1970, he was employed as a

traditional musician at the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Co-operation (SLBC) and he remained there till he retired in 1990. During his time at the SLBC he met various opportunities to perform and collaborate with visiting musicians outside the ritual context. Undoubtedly his biggest achievement was receiving the *Kalābhūṣana* award in 1988, which is a presidential award given to exceptional traditional artists of Sri Lanka. Generally, most experienced traditional drummers of Jayantha's caliber do not willingly share the intimate knowledge of their art form with students or researchers. However, Jayantha's long-sightedness led him to believe that exposure of Low-Country drumming was necessary if it is to survive in the future. Because of this he was most approachable and encouraging during our discussions. He acknowledged my musical background and respect for Low-Country drumming and encouraged me to play a major role in ensuring the survival of Low-Country drumming. "You have the technology, knowledge and skills to find out things about Low-Country drumming that I don't know about. You also have the musical maturity to ensure the survival of our drumming. So I must help you by telling you all I know."<sup>25</sup>

A few days prior to my third fieldwork period, I was informed of the sudden death of Sandhoris Jayantha. By this time I had a well established, close relationship with his family thus I was able to share the grieving process of their loved, family member. To overcome the sense of wanting to complete an unfinished task, I had to find a new consultant to carry out the latter stages of my study. On request, Prasantha Rupathilake agreed to be my new consultant. The fact that he had closely studied with Jayantha for over a decade, and he had established himself as the most sought after, traditional

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<sup>25</sup> Sandhoris Jayantha, personal interview, Hokandara, Sri Lanka, trans. Sumuditha Suraweera, 9 May 2006.

drummer in the field, left me little doubt that there would not be any other person who would better suit this role.

Prasantha (born in 1972), is a rare exponent of traditional drumming, as he is equally experienced and established in both the contemporary music scene as well as the rituals. His ritual experience began from the age of fifteen, when he started accompanying his father, which he continues to this date. His experience as a contemporary musician began in 1989 when he worked as an artist for the International Peace Council of Sri Lanka for seven years.<sup>26</sup> Like Jayantha, Prasantha has also worked for the SLBC. Prasantha's collaborative nature is evident throughout his career; he has designed and built a drum which has Sri Lankan and Japanese influences, performed at the WOMAD (World of Music Arts and Dance) Festival in Singapore and Sri Lanka, and conducted a drum orchestra of 350 drummers, which was commissioned by the International Cricket Council. Currently Prasantha is a member of the Sri Lankan State Dance Ensemble and has become a respected teacher with a wide following of students. Through the close association of Prasantha, I also established close associations with his father Daniel Rupathilake and brother Susantha Rupathilake who are equally talented traditional artists.

Daniel currently, 68 years of age, is one of the most respected dancers of the tradition and he continues to actively engage in ritual performances. Being born into a family lineage of traditional Low-Country arts practitioners, Daniel learnt Low-Country drumming, dance, painting, sculpture and astrology from his father Simon Fernando, who was a

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<sup>26</sup> During these years Prasantha performed extensively in many European countries, throughout Asia, Australasia and the United States.

respected artist during his time. For Daniel, Low-Country performance has become an intuitive art form, as a result of years of experience performing in a countless number of rituals. In recognition of this service to the Low-Country arts, Daniel was awarded a Presidential Award in 1996. Susantha (born in 1970) the elder son of Daniel, is also a well established traditional artist in Sri Lanka. Susantha, too, was exposed to ritual performances at a young age, where most of his learning occurred through his father and grandfather. Like Prasantha, Susantha has also been a member of the State Dance Ensemble and is currently a permanent musician of the SLBC. His collaborative nature is also apparent throughout his career, where he has performed with a number of leading dance ensembles and artists in Sri Lanka:<sup>27</sup> Chithrasena Dance Ensemble, Budhawatta Dance Ensemble, Ravibandu Vidyapathi and Panibaratha.

Following the hands-on approach of the likes of William Malm<sup>28</sup> and Gert-Matthias Wegner,<sup>29</sup> practical, first-hand experience of learning the drumming is used in this study. Immersing oneself in the art form, and letting questions arise as one becomes more familiar with the details, is chosen over carrying out regular structured interviews. At the start of the initial drumming lesson, Jayantha respectfully handed his drum over to me and requested that I wish that the art form I am about to learn may bring me happiness and prosperity. In a normal session, I would spend around 3-4 hours either engaging in

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<sup>27</sup> With these ensembles Susantha, like his brother, has toured extensively over Europe, Asia, Australasia and North America.

<sup>28</sup> William P. Malm, *Six Hidden Views of Japanese Music* (London: University of California Press, 1986).

<sup>29</sup> Gert-Matthias Wegner, *The Dhimaibaja of Bhaktapur: Studies in Newar Drumming I*, ed. Albrecht Wezler, vol. 12 (Kathmandu: Nepal Research Publications, 1986).  
Wegner, *The Nāykhībājā of Bhaktapur: Studies in Newar Drumming II*, ed. Albrecht Wezler, vol. 13 (Kathmandu: Nepal Research Centre Publications, 1988).



conversation, practising or playing along with Jayantha. During this fieldwork period, I visited him at least 3-4 times a week, depending on his availability. After introducing me to the basic sounds of the drum, Jayantha was happy to go back and forth from teaching me short patterns, rudimentary exercises and longer patterns.<sup>30</sup> The sessions were mostly individual. However, if other students happened to be around, particularly dancers, he would encourage me to play short patterns to accompany the dance. During the conversations, I was able to discuss a wide range of issues, some of which, rose directly from the lessons I received, and others, as a result of me familiarizing myself with the tradition through observation and reading.

During this stage, I gained an understanding of the drumming which was both that of an outsider and that of an insider. This was justified by Jayantha when he observed that I asked him questions that no one had ever asked him and thus he had rarely contemplated. Another instance, which supports this idea, occurred during my time away from the field, between the first and the second fieldwork periods. Normally, Low-Country drummers use their natural hand to play technical strokes which are more challenging. These technical strokes are predominantly played on the side which has the thinner membrane. Initially, I was unaware of this and Jayantha assumed that I was left-handed, even though I am right-handed. Consequently, I was taught the technical strokes as if I was left-handed. Jayantha soon realised that I was, in fact, right-handed but allowed me to keep using my weaker hand to produce the technical strokes, in order to strengthen its coordination. During my time away from the field, because I was dissatisfied with the

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<sup>30</sup> Introduced in Chapter 3

progress I was making on the *yak beraya*, I experimented with using my right-hand to play the technical strokes. On my return to the field during 2007, Jayantha noticed this change, which resulted in a considerable improvement, and commented that he himself would not have been able to do that. He commented that I had already gained a thorough understanding of the relationship between *akṣara* (drum syllables) and hand techniques, perhaps beyond that of an insider.

The drumming lessons during the second fieldwork period occurred in a similar fashion to the first. As I gained a better understanding of most of the short patterns, I was taught larger compositions and pieces played in the *devol maḍuva* ritual (Chapter 4). An interesting issue surfaced during this fieldwork period as I noticed that I was starting to understand the use of advanced techniques and improvisations which occurred in certain rituals I witnessed. However, I was unable to demonstrate this to Jayantha through playing the drum, and hence unable to successfully communicate these advanced concepts. In the tradition an understanding of this level occurs implicitly through years of playing and participating in ritual performance. As my situation was different, I was forced to come up with a creative method of communicating these aspects through performance. Towards the end of this period, I started to produce the sounds of the drum with conviction and played a number of the common patterns in the Low-Country drumming repertoire. Because of this, Jayantha was becoming confident that I could participate in rituals and it was discussed that I take part in my first ritual during my next fieldwork period.

The absence of Jayantha during my third fieldwork, somewhat disrupted the flow of my practical playing of the *yak beraya*. However, I was able to convince Prasantha, my new consultant, of my understanding of some of the advanced patterns and improvisations. I did this by demonstrating the patterns on the Western drum set, on which I was performing at a much more advanced level, compared to that on the *yak beraya*. Already at the time, I had attained a Bachelor of Music degree with Honours in jazz drumming, from the University of Canterbury in Christchurch. I also had several years of professional playing experience. The use of the Western drum set was necessary, as I realised that performing advanced patterns on the *yak beraya* required several years of extensive practice. During this period, I focused on the advanced aspects of the drumming related to improvisation and the relationship of the drumming and the dance.

Understating how the Low-Country drumming repertoire is used in performance was primarily gained through attending a number of rituals during the three fieldwork periods.

The Low-Country rituals witnessed during the period of this study are listed below.

- 1 May 2006 – Kalu Kumāra *samayama* in Pannipitiya at a residence near Vidyala Handiya.
- 24 Jun 2006 – *Devol maḍuva* in Madiwela organized by Tharindu *kapu mahattaya*.
- 27 Jun 2006 – *Graha pūjāva* at Jayantha's neighbor's residence in Hokandara .
- 25 Aug 2006 – *Devol maḍuva* in Hokandara at Valikala *kapu mahattaya*'s residence.
- 20 Apr 2007 – *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla temple grounds.
- 19 May 2007 – *Devol maḍuva* at Athurugiriya temple grounds.
- 9 Jun 2007 – *Devol maḍuva* in Arangala near Jayantha's residence.
- 21 Jul 2007 – *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual at a residence in Rajagiriya (an inner suburb of Colombo).
- 28 Jul 2007 – *Graha pūjāva* in Horana
- 8 Dec 2007 – Kalu Kumāra *samayama* in Pannipitiya

- 19 Dec 2007 – *Devol maḍuva* workshop directed by Sandhoris Jayantha at the local school in Hanwella.
- 10 Aug 2008 – *Garā yākuma* ritual at Bellanwilla temple grounds.
- 13 Sep 2008 – *Graha pūjāva* in Pannipitiya near Prasantha's residence.
- 25 Oct 2008 – *Yak maḍuva* in Kadawatha (this was similar to the *devol maḍuva* ritual).
  
- 21 Dec 2008 – *Devol maḍuva* in Arangala, organized by Lasantha *kapu mahattaya*.
- 1 Jan 2009 – *Bera pōya hēvisi*, A Buddhist ceremony held at the Bellanwilla temple grounds.
- 4 Apr 2009 – *Mal baliya* ritual, at a residence in Pannipitiya.
- 10 Apr 2009 – *Bhahirava pūjāva*, at residence in Homagama.

The performances witnessed in the initial fieldwork period in 2006 are recorded using a Canon HV10 Mini DV Camcorder, a Sony Mini disc MZ R35 recorder and a Sony ECM907 stereo condenser microphone. The equipment used during this initial fieldwork was reliable, however, reliable power was an issue. The video camera did not have a long battery life so I often had to organize a method of plugging it into a main power source, which was complicated at times when the rituals took place outside. In a number of performances witnessed since the second fieldwork period in 2007, the sound is recorded with a Korg MR 100 Professional mobile recorder using two Oktava MK-012 condenser microphones. The sound quality of the audio recording equipment used was a vast improvement from the first fieldwork period. However, the nature of the equipment meant that the equipment could not be set up where there was a possibility of someone damaging them. Also, in some situations such as private rituals, it was not appropriate to set up this equipment as it was less discrete compared to the mini disc recording device. The performances witnessed since December 2007 are visually recorded with a Sony HDR-SR5 high definition camcorder. The battery life on this camera was greatly

improved by the use of an additional battery and this overcame all the power issues that occurred in the initial fieldwork periods.

Transcriptions in this study intend to serve a similar purpose to that of most ethnomusicological publications around the 1990s, as they function as an accompaniment to the recordings rather than as a substitution for the recordings.<sup>31</sup> As a strict notational system is not used in this tradition, a notational system based on Western notation, formulated to clearly represent the relationship between the drum syllables and the hand techniques used to produce the sounds, is used. Explanations and suggestions of norms of the tradition accompany the transcriptions when dealing with rhythmic durations that cannot be represented accurately with traditional note values. Initially, the notation did not include the Sinhala characters, however, it was found that by doing so, massively improved the ability of my consultants and other traditional artists to check the notation and ensure that I had recorded the patterns correctly.

Chapter 1 of this thesis provides a background of the contemporary contexts in which Low-Country drumming is performed. Three contexts are identified and explained: rituals, Buddhist ceremonies and secular settings. It is shown why the ritual remains to be the most suitable context in which the drumming should be studied. Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the *yak beraya*, placing it in the context of other commonly used instruments in traditional music. Special attention is given to the current construction process of the *yak beraya*, which is an area overlooked in both Sinhala and English literature. Chapter 3

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<sup>31</sup> Nettl, 77.

presents a theory of Low-Country drumming in its own terms. This chapter addresses the fundamental relationship between *akṣara* (drum syllables) and techniques of drumming, which is an area that is not explicitly recognized in the tradition. Chapters 4-7 detail three rituals chosen for study, *devol maḍuva*, *Kalu Kumāra samayama* and *graha pūjāva* respectively, and present an ethnographic study of the performance aspects, in particular the drumming. The *devol maḍuva*, being the most expansive ritual, provides an opportunity to introduce the Low-Country drumming repertoire and the fundamental characteristics of the drumming that contribute towards its expressive nature. The *Kalu Kumāra samayama*, being a ritual of demonic nature, allows the discussion of how artists enhance this nature of the ritual through music. The *graha pūjāva* is examined in order to reveal the advanced techniques and high level of spontaneity in performance used by the most experienced artists of the tradition. Having revealed extensive insight into Low-Country drumming and performance in rituals, Chapter 7 examines the current trends of the ritual. The decline of the traditional ritual which served as the main context for Low-Country performance is highlighted, and the need to bring forth the performance aspects of the ritual into a contemporary performance setting is addressed. This final chapter includes a collaborative performance project, which was considered to be a successful approach of presenting performance aspects of Low-Country rituals on the concert stage. Chapters 3-6 of this thesis are supplemented with short excerpts of video (Appendix 6) and audio (Appendix 7) examples of the drumming transcriptions (DVD and CD attached to the back cover). These excerpts are compiled from various recordings made during the fieldwork. Throughout this thesis, Sinhala terms will be frequently introduced and referred to. A knowledge of these terms is necessary for a full appreciation of the subject

and because these terms are in common parlance among the performing community. For the ease of the reader, I include a glossary of Sinhala terms with their English meanings in Appendix 2.

# Chapter 1

## Low-Country Drumming in the Contemporary Context

Kulatillake emphasized that “the main score in the Sinhala drum music is still preserved in the ritual.”<sup>32</sup> Low-Country drumming is currently performed in three main contexts: rituals, religious Buddhist ceremonies and secular performance settings. This chapter analyzes these different performance contexts in order to illustrate that drumming of *yak beraya* in both Buddhist and secular settings by and large duplicate a small component of its use in the rituals. This makes the rituals the most suitable context in which to study Low-Country drumming. In order to appreciate the ritual context, however, it is first necessary to present a brief overview of the religious system of the Sinhala Buddhists.

### 1.1 The traditional Sinhala Buddhist pantheon

The traditional Sinhala Buddhist pantheon is a hierarchical model and is described in detail in several texts.<sup>33</sup> The Buddha occupies the highest position of the hierarchy. The authority of the Buddha remains effective through the delegation by warrants (*varam*) which are given to supernatural beings. Within the hierarchy and immediately below the Buddha, are the Gods of Four Warrants (*hatara varam deviyo*). Under these are positioned a variety of other powerful deities such as the Twelve Gods (*doloha deviyo*) and the planetary deities (*graha deviyo*). Below these are the humans and at the bottom of the hierarchy are the demons (*yakku* or *samayam*) and other malignant spirits.

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<sup>32</sup> Cyril de Silva Kulatillake, *Metre, Melody, and Rhythm in Sinhala Music* (Colombo: Sinhala Music Research Unit, Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, 1980) 36.

<sup>33</sup> Gananath Obeyesekere and Richard Gombrich, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988) 3-63. De Silva, 17-34. Obeyesekere, 37-70.



In understanding Buddhist philosophy it is also necessary to understand the law of karma. This refers to the consequences of past actions, in this life or previous ones, whether good or bad. When humans carry out acts of virtue (*pin*), Gods share the merit of their actions, and look after humans in return. By collecting merit, or good karma, in this manner, beings come closer to achieving the ultimate state of enlightenment, that is, becoming a Buddha. Gods are closer to enlightenment, whereas for humans, achieving this status is generally considered to be unattainable during their present lifetime. Humans are also subject to malevolent influences (*dōsa*) from demons and planetary deities whether due to bad karma or unfavourable planetary movements. The Buddha, Dharma (the teachings) and Sangha (the monastic order in which Buddhism is preserved) are recognized collectively as the Three Refuges. In addition, lay priests communicate with the Gods and demons. In rituals these priests are identified as *kapu mahattaya* (*mahattaya* means gentleman) and *kaṭṭadi mahattaya* respectively.

## 1.2 Ritual in Sinhala Buddhism

Rituals in Sinhala Buddhism require the “worship of gods and propitiation of demons, belief in and attempted manipulation of supernatural powers.”<sup>34</sup> There are different opinions on whether rituals should be considered intrinsic to Sinhala Buddhism or rather, distinguished from the practices directly related to Theravada Buddhism. Sheeran notes a number of different labels given to this component of Sinhala Buddhism: “It has been referred to variously as the ‘Little Tradition’... the ‘pre-Buddhist indigenous religion,’

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<sup>34</sup> Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 3.

the ‘sub-religion’ ... the ‘spirit religion’ ... and ‘animism’.”<sup>35</sup> Obeyesekere stated that the Sinhala Buddhists pantheon “is neither a Theravada Buddhist nor a specifically ‘animist’ one, but a Sinhalese Buddhist pantheon. The Buddha, gods, demons, and an array of lesser supernatural beings constitute a single system, which displays a wholly consistent structure.”<sup>36</sup> However, the movement of “Protestant Buddhism”<sup>37</sup> has meant that the middle-class Sinhala people “consider practices which they observe among the working class and peasantry (e.g., traditional community rituals to the deities . . .) to be ‘folk’ practices that are not to be confused with ‘true’ Buddhism.”<sup>38</sup> This view is revealed in the categorization of Sinhala Buddhist rituals by A.G.S. Kariyawasam, where he places the practices of Sinhala Buddhists under three broad headings. The first two categories are associated with lay Buddhist activities while the third, is associated with rituals adapted from folk religions.<sup>39</sup> These rituals, considered under the latter category are recognized as ‘semi-religious’ in character and are considered a “mixture of Buddhism and folk religion.”<sup>40</sup> It is these rituals that are the focus of this thesis.

Three types of rituals were identified by my performer informants:

1. *Bali* (also known as *bali yāga* or *bali śāntikarma*)
2. *Tovil*
3. *Maḍu* (or *dēva śāntikarma*)

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<sup>35</sup> Anne Sheeran, "Sri Lanka," *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South Asia; the Indian Subcontinent*, ed. A. Arnold, vol. 5 (New York: Garland, 2000) 955.

<sup>36</sup> Kapferer, 30.

<sup>37</sup> Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 4.

<sup>38</sup> Kapferer, 31.

<sup>39</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, *Buddhist Ceremonies and Rituals of Sri Lanka* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995) ix.

<sup>40</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, 50.

Kapferer identifies the same rituals as *bali tovil*, *yak tovil* and *dēva tovil*.<sup>41</sup> Each ritual will be explained and representative examples of each type of ritual examined. I.e., *bali* (*graha pūjāva*), *tovil* (*Kalu Kumāra samayama*) and *maḍu* (*devol maḍuva*).

### 1.3 *Bali*

The term *bali* refers to an offering of a gift or oblation.<sup>42</sup> The *bali* ritual stems from a belief in the benevolent and malevolent influences of the nine planetary deities on humans. It is often intended for a particular individual. During this ritual, the planetary deities are invoked and pacified in order to ward off their evil influences. The deities are Ravi (sun), Chandra (moon), Kuja (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Guru (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sani (Saturn) and Ketu, the ascending and descending modes of the moon. Each planetary deity, among other things, has its own particular form, colour, vehicles, weapons and preferred foods.<sup>43</sup> The *bali* ritual contains some demonic references, however, it is not regarded as a demonic ritual per se.

It is believed that from birth to death, an individual passes through periods over which certain planets have authority. The duration of these periods can be known in advance by referring to a horoscope that charts relevant planetary movements. A horoscope is cast at one's birth, and is often consulted at times of crisis or illness. If it is ascertained that an individual is under a planetary combination with a harmful influence, a *bali* ritual may be recommended to weaken these influences.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Kapferer, 14 and 130.

<sup>42</sup> Tissa Kariyawasam, 13.

<sup>43</sup> De Silva, 23-24.

<sup>44</sup> De Silva, 15-22.

Scholars agree that the present version of the *bali* practised in Sri Lanka originates in the Kotte period.<sup>45</sup> Prior to this period, there had been an established practice of Indian Brahmins visiting Sri Lanka to conduct *bali* rituals for royals and other privileged people in exchange for considerable amounts of money. One story<sup>46</sup> revolves around one such Brahmin in the ritual trade, known as Pandit Ramachandra, and Sri Rahula of Totagamuva, a popular nationalistic monk at the time, who was determined to reduce the power of the Brahmins. The monk invites the Brahmin to perform a *bali* ritual at his temple. Without the Brahmin's knowledge, the monk instructs his skilled disciple, Vidagama Maitree Thero, to transcribe the whole ritual as it is carried out. At the end of the ritual, the monk Rahula claims that he recalled a similar ritual to the one just performed, stored in the collection of palm leaf texts at his temple. When the Brahmin is shown the text, he realises that he has been tricked. He feels embarrassed and leaves, vowing never to return again. De Silva states that "Rahula deliberately stole the knowledge of the *bali* ritual from the Brahmin and gave [it] a Buddhist appearance by placing it under the Buddha."<sup>47</sup>

Conversely however, a number of mythological stories exist, tracing the origin of the *bali* ritual back to the time of the Buddha. One story, presented by Tissa Kariyawasam revolves around Vijaya, who is believed to be the first King of Sri Lanka, and Kuveni, a demon Queen.<sup>48</sup> Another story, mentioned by the same author, is about the King Mahā Sammata, who is considered to be the first King of mankind. Mahā Sammata was the son

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<sup>45</sup> "Kotte refers to a southwesterly kingdom, 1371-1597." Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 959.

<sup>46</sup> The story given here is based on what Sandhoris Jayantha told me.

<sup>47</sup> De Silva, 38.

<sup>48</sup> Tissa Kariyawasam, 19-28.

of the Surya (sun) God. The first ever time the sun shone, the Surya prince became the King with everyone's blessings. In this myth, he dreamt that a viper fell on him. As a result of continually contemplating this dream, he suffered severe headaches, swollen limbs, and finally became insane. This is regarded as the first illness that had ever befallen man. After many treatments, a *bali* ritual, carried out by Brahmins, made the King recover his normal health.<sup>49</sup>

The two most popular stories relate to the mythical city of Visala in India. In the first version, a group of Lichavi princes in the kingdom of Vishala are playing in the sand, when one mysteriously falls ill. In order to cure the prince, the sages make a statue of the prince from sand and offer it to the demons, and this cures the prince. The second version, also set in the city of Visala, mentions the Buddha explicitly. This is the story that is referred to by S.N. Daniel when he performs rituals.

In Daniel's version, the Buddha chants texts (*pirit*) intended to ward off malevolent spirits in the city of Visala, at a time when the city is swept with an epidemic (*janapati rōgaya*). The text is the *ruvan sutra*, and the recital of it eradicates most of the illnesses and suffering. However, there remain pockets of *dōsa* due to influential planetary deities, demons, and other gods. The Buddha advises the practice of performing *bali* rituals to seek protection from this suffering. De Silva notes that “whatever actual historical connections between *bali* and this particular place and time exi[s]t, the *bali* is given a powerful legitimacy by this association with the Buddhist mythological tradition.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> This story is similar to the origin of the *devol maḍuva* (section 1.5.2)

<sup>50</sup> De Silva, 34.

Most ritual experts believe that there are 35 types of *bali*.<sup>51</sup> The size and type of the *bali* are directly linked to the individual needs of the patient and the misfortunes suffered. Only four types of *bali* rituals were held during the period of this study: *graha pūjāva* (offering to *graha deviyo*, i.e. planetary deities), *mal baliya* (similar offering to *graha deviyo* conducted for pregnant women to ensure their pre-natal care and safe delivery of the child), Bhahirava *pūjāva* (conducted to protect houses and land)<sup>52</sup> and *hat aḍiya*. This last ritual is an offering to *graha deviyo* with an additional segment based around the seven steps taken by Prince Siddhartha at his birth.<sup>53</sup> All rituals except the Bhahirava *pūjāva*, only vary slightly from each other, and include drumming and dancing. The Bhahirava *pūjāva* is solely a chanting ritual. The *graha pūjāva* is chosen for this study as it represents the most generic version of the *bali* ritual. However, performances of the generic sections of *mal baliya* and *hat aḍiya* will also be considered in order to enrich the analysis of the ritual's drumming.

The structure of the traditional *bali* ritual is said to be divided into three periods or Three Watches: *sāṇḍāyama* (evening watch), *mādiyama* (midnight watch) and *aluyama* (morning watch).<sup>54</sup> In the *sāṇḍāyama*, supernatural spirits are invited to the ritual area. They are given offerings in the *mādiyama*, then encouraged to leave the patient's surroundings in the *aluyama*.<sup>55</sup> The detailed chronology following shows the overall

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<sup>51</sup> De Silva, 30.

<sup>52</sup> A mythical story of the God Bhahirava appears on: Wirz, 181.

<sup>53</sup> Jayasena Kottegoda and Tyurin Abeywickrama, eds., *Matara Sampradāyika Sūṇiyam Śāntikarmaya Saha Sammantranaya [The Sūṇiyam Ritual of the Matara Tradition]* (Colombo: Ministry of Cultural Affairs, 1996) 20.

<sup>54</sup> Tissa Kariyawasam, 85-86.

<sup>55</sup> Bandara, 96.

structure of the *graha pūjāva* ritual and how the music is accommodated. A more detailed description and analysis of the performance of the ritual is presented in Chapter 6, using the segments named below.

1. Ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*)<sup>56</sup> and the observance of five precepts
2. Recitation of verses in salutation to the Three Refuges
3. Recitation of verses of *bali* ritual inception
4. Placing of ceremonial objects on the patient's feet
5. Chanting of the thread with *pirit* (*pirit huya*)
6. Unveiling of the curtain to display the altars
7. Offerings made to planetary deities
8. Singing verses for the planetary deities (*graha kavi*)
9. Blessings with oil lamp threads
10. Warding off the malevolent spirits and ritual conclusion

#### **1.4 *Tovil***

*Tovil*, unlike the *bali* rituals which are for pacification of planetary deities, are identified as rituals carried out to ward off evil influences inflicted by demons. Traditionally, *tovil* rituals are exorcism rites and are aimed at healing individuals possessed by demons. Such rituals were studied by Kapferer and Wirz. Sheeran confirms the exorcist nature of the ritual: “The cluster of practices that constitute a *tovil* usually involves a possession as well as appearances of the various malignancies and negative influences in masked

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<sup>56</sup> This piece is played at most openings or inaugurations. See Chapter 4 for details.

form.”<sup>57</sup> The *tovil* ritual studied in this thesis, known as the Kalu Kumāra *samayama*,<sup>58</sup> is much smaller in scale and does not involve masks. Although it resembles an exorcism, this ritual is not carried out for individuals believed to be possessed, and therefore does not involve possession. Instead it is carried out for women who are unable to conceive and believed to be under the influence of the Kalu Kumāra demon.

Paranavitana explains: “The birth of a child is considered [by Sinhala Buddhists] as one of most joyous occasions and a great achievement for a family. Consequently, the pregnant women are given a special place in society and treated with respect. When the news of the pregnancy is expressed to the members of the family, they take all the steps to please the one who is pregnant and protect her and the child by performing family customs, rituals and meritorious acts.”<sup>59</sup> When a couple are unable to conceive for a number of years in their marriage, one belief is that the woman may be under the influence of the Kalu Kumāra demon. The woman involved in one of the *tovil* rituals I attended, found it difficult to conceive for the first ten years of marriage, which is an exceptionally long time to be without children for a married couple in Sinhala culture.

This Kalu Kumāra *samayama* ritual is also known as the *kalas biñdīma* (the breaking of the pot). This name stems from a rite carried out a few months prior to the ritual. Daniel explained that the woman involved in this ritual had a positive result within three months of the initial consultation of the *kāṭṭadi mahattaya*. At the initial consultation, a clay pot

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<sup>57</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 961.

<sup>58</sup> The Kalu Kumāra *samayama* is considered the equivalent of the more elaborate *raṭa yakuma* in the Southern regions.

<sup>59</sup> Rohini Paranavitana, "Some Customs and Superstitions Associated with Childbirth in Sri Lankan Sinhalese Society," *Folklore and Folkloristics* 1.1 (2008) 35.



(*kalaha*) is filled with a number of auspicious items as an offering to the demon, and this is kept in a high place inside the woman's house. During the same consultation, the woman makes a vow to carry out a ritual in the event that she conceives. The ritual is generally held a few months after the child is born. The clay pot is smashed during the ritual performance and this symbolizes the fulfilment of the vow to hold a ritual.

The legend of the Kalu Kumāra demon has a number of variations.<sup>60</sup> A popular version goes back to the period of the ancient Anuradhapura kingdom (4<sup>th</sup> century BC – 11 century AD) of Sri Lanka. It is based on the Neela Maha Yōdaya, a giant, who serves a Sinhala King and leads an army to fight against a King of North India who had enslaved many Sinhala people. While in India, the giant comes across a mysterious city, Strīpura (city of women). There, his handsome and well built body attracts the attention of many women by whom he is eventually harassed. The giant dies in anger and is reborn as the Kalu Kumāra demon that harasses women in revenge.

The Kalu Kumāra demon is among several others that are traditionally believed to spread illness and disease. Among these, are the Riri *yakā* (the blood demon), Mahasōna (demon of the cemetery) and the Sanni *yakā* (also known as Kōla Sanniya) which is a composite of eighteen different demons. The Kōla Sanniya is the chief of these demons. In association with his follower, the Sanni *yakku* are identified as being responsible for causing specific illnesses.<sup>61</sup> Today, rituals held for these latter demons are popularly

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<sup>60</sup> See: Wirz, 34. Also, Kapferer, 122.

<sup>61</sup> For example, *vedda sanniya* is believed to cause bubonic plague, *vata sanniya* is believed to cause flatulence, *kepala sanniya* is believed to spread insanity among men and *maru sanniya* causes delirium.

known as the *daha aṭa sanniya* (18 Sanniya's) and are of a large-scale and exhibitive in nature. Another demon known as the *Garā yakā*, is believed to get rid of *vas dōsa* "which includes minor witchcraft from the evil eye, mouth, and tongue as well as ritual danger from inadvertent taboo violation or incorrect performance of ritual,"<sup>62</sup> and appears in the *devol maḍuva* ritual (see section 1.5.1).

The exorcism rituals studied by Kapferer are clearly organized according to the traditional Three Watches (explained in the *bali* ritual structure in section 1.3), with significant breaks in between each segment.<sup>63</sup> However, the *Kalu Kumāra samayama* is not organized in such a manner, even though a number of segments in the ritual are dedicated to the demons of Three Watches. The *Kalu Kumāra samayama* lasts for around seven hours (8pm – 3 am) and includes a small number of performers (four at the most). The breaks between the segments are relatively short. The ritual is small in scale, with the attendance of only a few close family members. It is held indoors in the main lounge, aside from the segment which presents the offerings of the *Kalu Kumāra* demon. The description of the ritual and analysis of its music in Chapter 5 is organized under the following structure:

1. Ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*) and the observance of five precepts
2. Recital of verses of salutation to the Three Refuges
3. Inviting the demons of the Three Watches
4. Placing of ceremonial objects on the patient's feet

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Sourced from: Purandara Sri Bhadra Marapana, "Demonology," ed. Museum of Ethnology and Folk Art (Ratnapura, Sri Lanka, N.d.)

<sup>62</sup> Obeyesekere, 173.

<sup>63</sup> Kapferer, 137.

5. Unveiling of the curtain to display the altars
6. Dance segment dedicated to the demons of the Three Watches
7. *Hat pada pelapāliya* (seven dances) and offering food (*dola*) to Kalu Kumāra demon
8. Dedication of offerings (*pidēni taṭu*) for Mahasōna and demons of Three Watches
9. Dedication of offerings (*pidēni taṭu*) for Kalu Kumāra demon
10. Breaking of the clay pot (*kalas biñdīma*)
11. Warding off the malevolent spirits from the ritual house and ritual conclusion

## 1.5 Maḍu

The third broad category of rituals, *maḍu*, are communal rituals, carried out in honour of the deities. These rituals intend to bring prosperity to the entire community. Similar to *bali*, these rituals contain demonic references even though they are not considered to be rituals of demonic nature. Various forms of these rituals have existed in the past (*gammaḍuva*, *pūnā maḍuva*,<sup>64</sup> and *pam maḍuva*),<sup>65</sup> however today the version of the ritual referred to as the *devol maḍuva* is the most popular. During Kapferer's study, the *gammaḍuva* and *devol maḍuva* were performed to "protect the community from misfortune as well as from a variety of communicable diseases such as measles, chicken pox and small pox."<sup>66</sup> These latter aims of healing are absent in contemporary *devol maḍuva* rituals.

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<sup>64</sup> Obeyesekere, 71.

<sup>65</sup> Wirz, 152.

<sup>66</sup> Kapferer, 14.

The *devol maḍuva* is by far the most expansive Low-Country ritual seen today, in terms of participants, audience, the length of ritual, the amount of drumming patterns and the ritualistic procedures. It is held outdoors and consists of around twenty performers in total. The *devol maḍuva* often accommodates younger artists and thus serves as a useful training ground. The ritual usually commences around 7 pm and concludes sometime between 10 am to midday, the next day. The ritual primarily honours the goddess Pattini, who is one of the most popular deities among the Sinhala Buddhists and Hindus of the east coast of Sri Lanka. The content of the ritual is believed to be based on one of the greatest poems in Tamil literature, the *Cilappatikāram* which is composed during A.D. 500-800.<sup>67</sup> Two other deities are worshipped with high priority: Devol (the deity after whom the ritual is named) and Vāhala (also known as Daḍimunḍa or Daḍimunḍa Vāhala Bandāra). The ritual also accommodates the major Gods in the traditional Sinhala Buddhist pantheon such as the Gods of Four Warrants and the Twelve Gods. Among the demons referenced are those of the Three Watches and the Garā demon. As with the other rituals, there are a number of mythical stories attached to the supernatural beings of the *devol maḍuva*, and as a background to the ritual and to enhance the appreciation of the segments, I mention a number of them below. The deities Pattini, Devol and Vāhala, which have segments of the ritual named after them, are considered first, followed by the legend of the Garā demon.

### **1.5.1 Legends of the supernatural beings**

One version of the story of Pattini, describes her as a sincere, truthful and trustworthy woman from a family of affluent merchants. She is married to Kōvalan, the son of a

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<sup>67</sup> Obeyesekere, 3. Also confirmed by Sandhoris Jayantha.

merchant prince. Kōvalan indulged in a life of luxury and pleasure and leaves Pattini to live with Matavi, an attractive dancer. Having exhausted all his resources living with Matavi, he returns to Pattini, who welcomes her husband without any anger or ill-will. They both set off to the city of Madurai with the intention of starting a new life. While in Madurai, Pattini gives her husband one of her gold ankle bracelets. Kōvalan is tricked by a goldsmith, to whom he was trying to sell the anklet, and he gets wrongly accused of a theft that is reported from the queen's palace. Kōvalan is beheaded under the King's order without trial. Pattini having heard of the tragedy, rushes to the King in fury, accuses the King of murdering her husband, and destroys the King and his city by tearing her left breast, which sets the city on fire.<sup>68</sup>

The myth of Devol describes the Devol prince, who is the son of Sri Rāmasimḥe from the city of Kuduppūri in North India, as a trouble-maker causing havoc for his people. The King loses his patience, and deports the prince along with his six brothers on ships. The ships get caught in a storm near Sri Lanka and the princes plead to the God of the seas (*muhudu manimēkalā*) to save them, and attach a gemstone to the top of the mast as an offering. They are denied entry to the island at several ports by various powerful Gods, among which, is the goddess Pattini, who creates seven mountains of fire. The princes cool the fires and are given a warrant from Pattini, and are able to finally land in the southern coastal town of Sīnigama. The princes in return agree to wipe out illness and suffering in the country. This ability of Devol to control fire is symbolized in the fire-walking segment of the ritual. The segment of planting the Torch of Time (known as the

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<sup>68</sup>Obeyesekere, 25. See also: N.a., *Kannaki, Goddess of Fertility and Conjugal Fidelity*, 2 Apr 2009 <<http://pattini.org>>.

*kālapañḍama*), which is a decorated areca pole with a torch affixed on top, symbolizes the Devol story. Decorative chains are attached to the Torch of Time to represent the shape of a ship and the Torch of Time is intended to protect the community from untimely disasters.<sup>69</sup>

The myth surrounding Vāhala refers to the time of Buddha's enlightenment. Māra, or death, (personified as Vasavat, a divine being such as Satan in Christianity) accompanied by a host of demons and female temptresses try to stop Buddha's enlightenment. All the deities who were present to witness the auspicious occasion fled in fear, except Vāhala, who stood by to defend the Buddha. Thus Vāhala is considered to be the "controller of demons."<sup>70</sup> Vāhala's fearless and courageous nature is enacted in the segment of the ritual dedicated to the deity.<sup>71</sup>

One of demons referenced in the ritual is the Garā *yakā*, and a segment dedicated to him appears near the end of the *devol maḍuva*. Garā literally means 'devour', and is believed to be a greedy demon that eats up everything, including polluted substances. The myth of Garā refers to a prince called Dala Kumāra (Tusk Prince) who desires his own sister, Giri Dēvi. Dala Kumāra's father, acting on prior predictions made by astrologers, separates the prince from his sister at an early age. The attempts fail, and the prince kidnaps his sister, taking her away to the forests, and lives with her. One day, while her brother is

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<sup>69</sup> K. N. O. Dharmadhasa, *Gamaḍuva* (Colombo: Department of Cultural Affairs, 1996) 11. Also confirmed by Sandhoris Jayantha

<sup>70</sup> Obeyesekere, 112.

<sup>71</sup> Obeyesekere, 212-214.

away, Giri Dēvi runs away and hangs herself from forest vines. In his rage, Dala Kumāra creates destruction and havoc.<sup>72</sup>

### 1.5.2 Origin of the *devol maḍuva* ritual

The origin of the *devol maḍuva* ritual is described in the tale of the Tamil King Sēraman of India in which the King is woken up by an antelope during his sleep. Angered by the event, the King orders his ministers to hunt this animal. The animal, after being chased, dies in front of the King's palace in anger, and wishes an equal suffering upon the King in the future. Days pass, and in a routine bathe at the lotus pool, the King spots a beautiful lotus standing out from the rest. Mesmerized by its beauty, the King breaks it from its stem and smells its pleasant aroma. He afterwards spots a number of small frogs. The King imagines that one of these went into his head and through this paranoia, develops a serious headache. One of the frogs is a reincarnation of the animal which died in the King's palace. The headache could not be cured despite spending considerable wealth on medical experts. In consulting the Brahmins about a dream he had, in which a beautiful woman travels in the air, the King is advised to stage a ritual as an offering for the woman who is recognized as the goddess Pattini. The King as recommended, sails to Sri Lanka and holds the first *devol maḍuva* ritual at a place called Ruvanvālle. The ritual cures the King's headache. As a gesture of paying respect to the goddess who cured her King, the Queen offers a bough, crafted out of sandalwood, and wishes for prosperity on the island. This bough, known as the *bisō kapa* is commemorated in one of the segments of the ritual.

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<sup>72</sup> Obeyesekere, 184.

### 1.5.3 Ritual preparation

In preparation for the ritual, it is customary to plant a pole (known as a *kapa*), usually cut out from an areca tree (*areca catechu*), near the ritual grounds a few weeks prior to the set date of the ritual. This action is known as *kap situvīma*, and it is a promise made to the Gods to carry out a *devol maḍuva* ritual on an arranged date. Cancellations from this point onwards are extremely rare. During the same time, if a *milla* tree (*vitex altissima*) is not available near the ritual grounds, a branch of a *milla* tree is planted, in order to be used in the ritual. Unlike the other rituals studied in this thesis, the preparation of the ritual area itself usually begins at least a day prior to the event and involves a team of people headed by the *kottoruvā* (official ritual assistant). The preparation consists of building the ritual hut, numerous altars including the ceremonial archway (described in Chapter 4), various ritual objects which are featured in different segments, and performance tools for the dancers such as flame-torches.

### 1.5.4 Ritual structure

Analysis and description of the drumming of the ritual are presented in Chapter 4 under the following segments. In describing the segments, references are made to several rituals of *devol maḍuva* held during the period of this study.

1. Cutting of the *milla* tree (*milla kăpīma*)
2. Bringing in the oil to commence the ceremony (*tel vādavavīma* )
3. Dancers seek blessings and permission to perform in the ritual (*yahan dākma*)
4. Cleansing and incensing the ritual arena
5. Offering of fire to the demons (*pidēni dīma*)



6. Planting the Torch of Time (*kālapandama*)
7. Dance segment for the demons of the Evening Watch (*sāndā samayama*)
8. Planting of the Queen's Bough (*bisō kapa*)
9. Ritual of the ceremonial archway (*toran yāgaya*)
10. Segment dedicated to the Pattini deity
11. Performance of ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*)
12. *Telme*, the dance in honour of the Twelve Gods
13. Segment dedicated to the deity Vāhala
14. The dance of Devol and fire trampling
15. The dance of the Garā demon
16. Thanksgiving and sending the deities back to their abodes (*deviyanṭa pin dīma*)

## 1.6 Buddhist ceremonies

Low-Country drumming is currently experienced in several other Buddhist ceremonies outside the rituals mentioned above. I have identified a number of such contexts: the *bera pōya hēvisi* performance, the *pirit* chanting ceremony and Buddhist temple processions known as *perahāra*. The following paragraphs explain the typical drumming content of these contexts and show how the content of most events duplicate the above rituals, with the exception of the *bera pōya hēvisi* performance, which is extremely rare today.<sup>73</sup>

*Bera pōya hēvisi* is recognized as a specific type of *hēvisi* performance which is considered an offering of sound to the Buddha (*śabdha pūjā*).<sup>74</sup> The *hēvisi* ensemble uses

<sup>73</sup> I witnessed one performance during my fieldwork periods.

<sup>74</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, 15. Also see: Seneviratna, 53.

three instruments named *davula*, *tammaṭṭama* and *horanāva* (see section 2.2 for descriptions of these instruments). This ensemble is seen performing in temples, either on a daily basis or on every full moon (*pōya* day), and for *pirit* ceremonies and processions. The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy is one place where the *hēvisi* performance can be observed daily.<sup>75</sup> The *bera pōya hēvisi* is a specialized form of this event, where an ensemble of drummers playing the *yak beraya* join the performance.<sup>76</sup> In the performance held during this study, the two ensembles alternated, playing for around an hour at a time. Performances are carried out during the day and last from around 8 am to 5 pm. The absence of dance in this performance makes it distinctly Buddhist compared to the rituals discussed in previous sections. It is also seen as an opportunity for the drummers to display their technical skills. The content of the drumming mainly stems from the *magul bera* piece and its extensions known as *hatara vaṭṭam* and *hat vaṭṭam* which are rarely heard today. A senior drummer introduces one of these extension patterns and each drummer in the ensemble follows individually, playing the same pattern. Certain patterns played between these sections by the whole group act as bridges. Some of these patterns were performed during the *magul bera* performance of the *devol maḍuva* ritual until only a few years ago.<sup>77</sup> However, today even excerpts of these patterns are rarely performed at concerts. Consequently, I consider the drumming of *bera pōya hēvisi* beyond the parameters of this study.

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<sup>75</sup> Rajapakse gives a detailed account of the drumming at this temple in her book. Waidyawathie Rajapakse, *Daladhā Māligāva Saha Tūrya vādanaya [The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic and Its Percussion Music]* (Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers, 2002).

<sup>76</sup> The version of this performance in the Up-Country uses the *gāta beraya* instead of the *yak beraya*.

<sup>77</sup> Prasantha revealed this when he mentioned an incident where he and Jayantha were playing these patterns at a *devol maḍuva* ritual. Also, I have viewed footage of a *devol maḍuva* ritual held on 16 December 1994, which has these performances. This recording is archived at the C. de. S. Kulatillake Research and Information Centre, at the University of Visual and Performing Arts in Colombo.

*Pirit*, the Buddhist chanting ceremony is on occasion accompanied by the above *hēvisi* ensemble.<sup>78</sup> The ceremony is most commonly conducted by Buddhist monks, however it is also carried out by lay people (this version is called *gihi pirit*). Conducting this version of the ceremony served as one of the means of income for Sandōris Jayantha, during the latter years of his life when I first met him. Although I was not able to witness a *gihi pirit* first hand, Jayantha informed me that it is customary to play the *magul bera* and the *pūjā bera* at the start and end of the ceremony respectively.

*Perahāra* or processions organized by Buddhist temples consist of a large variety of performances, and one of these is usually a Low-Country ensemble. This ensemble would commonly play short repetitive patterns, mostly excerpts of those played in the rituals, in order to enable the performers to keep moving on the path of the procession. Dancers' costumes are often the ones they wear for the *telme* segment of the *devol maḍuva* ritual.

## 1.7 Secular performance settings

The *yak beraya* is used in several secular performance contexts: Buddhist weddings (not considered a sacred event), parades that welcome politicians and other important personnel, performances aimed at tourists, popular music recordings and the concert stage. Low-Country style performers are rarely hired for Buddhist weddings, as most wedding performances involve Up-Country style ensembles. Similar to *perahāra*, the wedding performances are limited to a number of repetitive patterns which are excerpts of those played in the rituals. In addition, a shortened version of the *magul bera* piece is

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<sup>78</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, 35. Kariyawasam's description of the *pirit* ceremony is of a rarely seen fully fledged event.

played to accompany the lighting of the oil lamp. Parades that welcome politicians and other important personnel involve similar performances to weddings. The country's best performers, who often find employment under the State Dance Ensemble, which operates as part of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, most regularly perform in these contexts.

Performances aimed at tourists intend to exhibit national heritage and pride, however, as Fleisher notes, these performances see the Low-Country drumming being compromised. "Many of those [younger drummers] who do decide to inherit the trade have discovered that one way to reconcile a desire to maintain their family tradition with the conflicting desire for socioeconomic self-betterment is through the capitalist commodification and commercialization of their skills: the big tourist hotels on the coast now regularly hire practitioners to perform modified versions of the dances and ceremonies to help augment the tourist trade. Of course, this development has ironically stripped the tradition of its 'tradition.'"<sup>79</sup>

The *yak beraya* also appears as an accompanying instrument in Sinhala popular music recordings. The genres vary from Sinhala light popular music to contemporary percussion music ensembles. A number of examples are listed:

- 1) W.D. Amaradeva – in the song entitled *satara varam devi maharaja*.<sup>80</sup>
- 2) Roahan Baddage – in songs entitled *mal sarā* and *dāsaman malak vagē*.<sup>81</sup>
- 3) Pradeep Sampath – in a song written about the *telme* dance.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Seth L. Fleisher, "Rethinking Historical Change in Sri Lankan Ritual: Deities, Demons, Sorcery, and the Ritualization of Resistance in the Sinhala Traditions of Suniyam," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 52.1 (Spring, 1996) 40.

<sup>80</sup> W. D. Amaradeva, *Sasara Vasana Turu*. Cassette. Singlanka. No number.

<sup>81</sup> Rohana Baddage, *Mal Sarā*. Cassette. Singlanka. No number.

4) Gunadasa Kapuge – in the song entitled *bimbarak senega*.<sup>83</sup>

5) Sunil Edirisinghe – in the song entitled *lenchina mage nangiyē*.<sup>84</sup>

In most of these settings, the use of the *yak beraya* is confined to short repetitive patterns. Therefore, the expressive nature of the Low-Country drumming in these settings is compromised. Aside from the popular music recordings, very few recordings of traditional music exist, and one recording entitled, ‘Rhythms of Sri Lankan drums,’ produced by Piyasara Shilpadhipathi is a notable example.<sup>85</sup> However, this recording does not include any drumming music of Low-Country rituals.

The concert stage, which includes concerts of traditional music, most often showcase performances which are short excerpts of various rituals that are arranged and limited to a few minutes.<sup>86</sup> A number of such concerts staged within the last several years are listed below:

- 1) *Santuru Rangālaya* – John De Silva Theatre, Colombo on 2 Sept 2002. This concert was a tribute to Sandhoris Jayantha. Some of the items included in the programme were: *vadiṅga patuna*, which is a dance from the Matara sub-tradition, a short item from the *bali* ritual, a *magul bera* performance and a performance of the *telme* dance.

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<sup>82</sup> N.a., Metacafe: Low Country Folk Dance of Sri Lanka, 25 July 2009

<[http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1022801/Low\\_Country\\_folk\\_dance\\_of\\_sri\\_lanka](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1022801/Low_Country_folk_dance_of_sri_lanka)>.

<sup>83</sup> Gunadasa Kapuge, *Dāsa Nilupul Temā*. Cassette. Singlanka. No number.

<sup>84</sup> Sunil Edirisinghe, *Saṇḍakadapahana*. CD. Singlanka. No number.

<sup>85</sup> Piyasara Shilpadhipathi, *Beranada: Rhythms of Sri Lankan drums*. CD. Singlanka. SLCD200025.

<sup>86</sup> Howard labels similar concerts of Korean traditional music as “pick—n—mix” concerts: Keith Howard, “Strategies for the Globalization of Korean Music,” *Journal of Korean Musicology* International Conference of Korean Musicologists (special issue, 2008) 351.

- 2) *Raṅga bera mihira* – Lionel Wendt Theatre, Colombo on 07 April 2009. This was a concert organized by Prasantha. The programme included one item of a masked dance performance from the Low-country tradition.
- 3) The Art of Chitrasena – Lionel Wendt Theatre, 21-23 July 2006. This was a memorial concert for the well known dancer, Chitrasena. The programme included a short performance of the masked play known as *kōlam* from the Matara sub-tradition.
- 4) Ceremony which granted Sri Lankan residency for Chinese expatriates - Banadaranaika Memorial International Conference Hall, 2 April 2009. This concert included two Low-country dance items: a *telme* dance and a masked dance.

## 1.8 Chapter summary

The use of the *yak beraya* is currently seen in a number of performance settings. In secular performance settings, the Low-Country performances of traditional music concerts are limited to several minutes. In addition, the use of the *yak beraya* in popular music, compromises the expressive nature of the drumming. The drumming content of Buddhist ceremonies, by and large, consists of excerpts of performances included in the rituals. Therefore, the ritual remains to be the most suitable context to study Low-Country drumming. The public ritual provides the largest body of drumming patterns and this means that a thorough knowledge of the basics of Low-Country drumming can be gained by studying this larger *devol maḍuva* ritual.

## Chapter 2

### The *Yak Beraya*

The *yak beraya* is the primary instrument representing the Low-Country tradition of drumming. It is among a number of other musical instruments also discussed in this chapter that are representative of traditional Sinhala music. The purpose of this chapter is to place the *yak beraya* in the context of these other instruments and focus on its present construction process, an area currently overlooked by Sinhala literature which tends to favour ancient instrument making practices.<sup>87</sup> General instrument making processes are also notably absent from English writing scholars. A summary of past practices of instrument making, in company with references as to how musicians perceive their instrument is included. This provides insights into the relationship between the instrument and the musician, while a brief comment on tuning and maintenance of the *yak beraya* concludes this chapter.

### 2.1 Instrument classification

The great chronicle Mahavaṃsa was written in the sixth century and is considered to be a primal record of Sri Lankan history. It classifies the traditional musical instruments of the island under a system recognized as *pañcatūrya nāda*<sup>88</sup> (*pañca* meaning fivefold). Of the

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<sup>87</sup> Anura Priyalal Sirisena, *Pañcatūrya Nādaya [A Study of the Pañcatūryanāda]* (Colombo: M.D Gunasena Ltd, 2005) 9-27.

Waidyawathie Rajapakse, *Udaraṭa Tūryavādāna Purāṇaya [The Ancient Up-Country Tradition]* (Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers, 2002) 52-118.

Karunaratna Bandara, *Udaraṭa Bera Vādāna Kalāva [The Art of Up-Country Drumming]* (Colombo: published by the author, 2000) 57-90.

<sup>88</sup> Rajapakse, 34-39. Seneviratna, 50.

Margaret J. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classification of Musical Instruments* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 68.

five categories, the first two refer to drums: *ātata* (single-headed drums) and *vitata* (double-headed drums). The third category *ātatavitata* is interpreted as string instruments or stringed drums,<sup>89</sup> while the final two, *susira* and *ghana* refer to aerophones and idiophones respectively. More recently however, Sedaraman suggested the classifications are better understood as: *ātata* (instruments played by hand), *vitata* (instruments played with a stick) and *ātatavitata* (instruments played with a stick and hand).<sup>90</sup> Acknowledging the widely accepted older representations, all drums introduced in this chapter can be placed in the *vitata* category of instruments.

## 2.2 Commonly used traditional instruments

Currently, aside from the *yak beraya*, the most commonly used drums are: the *gāṭa beraya*, *davula*, *tammaṭṭama*, *uḍḍakkiya* and *rabāna*. All except the latter two drums are played suspended from the player's waist. The *gāṭa beraya* (figure 2) represents the Up-Country tradition and is a double headed, barrel shaped, laced (with W lacing) membranophone played with hands on both sides.<sup>91</sup> The two drumheads are covered with different skins. Cow skin is used for the drumhead which produces a bass sound while the other side is covered with monkey or goat skins. The *gāṭa beraya* is never covered with cow intestines as implied by Sheeran.<sup>92</sup> This latter side produces the most characteristic sound unique to this drum; a sharp high-pitched sound recognized as the *jim* sound. The

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Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 968.

<sup>89</sup> Sheeran defines this category as “stringed drums” and Seneviratna recognizes this as “instrument with strings.”

<sup>90</sup> J. E. Sedaraman, *Uḍaraṭa Nāṭum Kalāva [Art of Up-Country Dancing]* (Colombo: M. D. Gunasena Ltd., 1997) 43.

<sup>91</sup> Ruth Midgley, ed., *Musical Instruments of the World: An Illustrated Encyclopedia by the Diagram Group* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1976) 140-142.

<sup>92</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 964.



standard length of the drum measures at 27 inches (69 cm),<sup>93</sup> 8 inches (20 cm) in diameter at the drumheads, and around 9.5 to 10.5 inches (24 to 27 cm) in diameter at the widest part of the body<sup>94</sup>. As Sheeran points out, attempts to consolidate an Up-Country tradition during the independence struggle at the turn of the century resulted in many characteristics of the region, including its instruments being considered as the purest and oldest of Sinhala culture.<sup>95</sup> Consequently, there exists a misconception by the general public that the *gāṭa beraya* is the most important of the Sri Lankan drums. This is yet another example where the Low-Country tradition is marginalized even within the genre of traditional music.



**Figure 2: *Gāṭa beraya* (representing the Up-Country tradition)**

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<sup>93</sup> Inches are used as a scale of measure as this is what is used by current drum makers.

<sup>94</sup> Sheeran states the *gāṭa beraya* is “roughly 86 centimeters [34 inches] in diameter at the widest part.” Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 964. This measurement is most likely to be the circumference of the widest part of the drum.

<sup>95</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 964.

The *davula* (figure 3), representing the Sabragamuwa, is a cylindrical shaped, laced (with Y lacing) membranophone played with a specially carved stick (*kaḍḍippuva*) on one side and using the hand on the other side. The drumheads are covered with goat skins. It measures around 15 to 17 inches (38 to 43 cm) in length and 12 to 14 inches (36 to 37 cm) in diameter at the drumheads. The *davula*'s sound does not contain a bass sound as low as the *gāṭa beraya* and the instrument's tone is generally more piercing, especially on the side that is beaten with the stick.



**Figure 3: *Davula* drums (representing the Sabaragamuwa tradition)**

The *tammattāma* (figure 4) is associated with the Buddhist temple rather than exclusively a single tradition. It consists of a pair of vessel-shaped kettle drums, laced (with W lacing), membranophones, bound together and played using a pair of specially made cane sticks (*kaḍḍippu*, plural) with curved, circular ends. Both drums measure around 8 to 9 inches (20 to 23 cm) in height and are covered with cow hides. The smaller, higher pitched drum measures 7 to 8.5 inches (18 to 22 cm) in diameter and the larger, lower-pitched drum measures around 8.5 to 10.5 inches (22 to 27 cm) in diameter. The

combination of the *tammaṭṭama*, the *davula* as well as another instrument called the *horanāva*, which is “a conical-bore, quadruple-reed oboe”<sup>96</sup>, constitutes the *hēvisi* ensemble referred to in Chapter 1 (section 1.6).



**Figure 4: *Tammaṭṭama***

The two smaller hand-held drums, *uḍḍakkiya* and *rabāna* are most commonly heard as an accompanying percussion instrument in light popular music recordings. The *uḍḍakkiya* (figure 5) is an hour glass shaped drum with variable tension<sup>97</sup> and the *rabāna* is a frame drum, with a diameter ranging from 10 to 14 inches.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 968.

<sup>97</sup> A good description and photograph also appears in: Kathy Scholz Atwood, "Sri Lanka," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie, vol. 20 (London: Macmillan, 1980) 34.

<sup>98</sup> A description of this drum and its various types and other performance contexts appears in: Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 964-965.



**Figure 5: *Uḍḍakkiya***

In addition to the *yak beraya*, rituals of this research also utilize two other instruments: a conch shell (*hak geḍiya*) and a small hand-held bell (*mini geḍiya*). Respectively these instruments are of the *susira* and *ghana* categories within the ancient, Mahavaṃsa classification system. The *hak geḍiya* often accompanies the *magul bera* (auspicious drumming) piece and is seen as symbolising an auspicious and positive atmosphere. The *mini geḍiya* used in *bali* rituals is intended to create a soundscape desirable for the healing nature of the ritual.



**Figure 6: *Mini geḍiya* or small hand-held bell (left), *hak geḍiya* or conch (right)**

### 2.3 The *yak beraya*

Jayantha believes that the *yak beraya* (literally demon drum), being the main instrument of the Low-Country, with its powerful, low and resonant timbre combined with the frequency, dynamics and vibration of the sounds, assists the communication between the ritual specialists and supernatural beings.<sup>99</sup> The power of the *yak beraya* is not openly recognized unlike the *ḍhol* of Garhwal studied by Alter: “Notion of the *ḍhol*’s power, as codified in the *Ḍhol sāgar* and reiterated regularly at rituals ... serve to reinforce Garhwalis’ beliefs in music’s power to communicate with the supernatural.”<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 7:** *Yak beraya* (representing the Low-Country tradition)

<sup>99</sup> Sandhoris Jayantha, personal interview, Hokandara, Sri Lanka, 10 July 2006.

<sup>100</sup> Andrew Alter, *Dancing with Devtās: Drums, Power and Possession in the Music of Garhwal, North India* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008), 134.



The *yak beraya* is also known as the *devol beraya* (named after the ritual *devol maḍuva* and the god *devol*), *ruhunu beraya* (named after a historically important Sinhala kingdom of the south called *Ruhunu*<sup>101</sup>), *pahataraṭa beraya* (Low-Country drum) and *gōśaka beraya* (*gōśaka* meaning noisy). It is a double-headed, laced (with W lacing), cylindrical-shaped membranophone, played with both the hands and strapped around the player's waist. The preferred wood, chosen in order of preference by current drum makers for the body of the drum, is from trees with hard cores such as *āhāla* (golden shower tree – *cassia fistula*), *milla* (*vitex altissima*), *kohōmba* (*azadirachta indica*), *jack* (*artocarpus integrifolia*) and *kitul* (*caryota urens*).<sup>102</sup> It is preferred that the previously mentioned drums are also made with similar woods. Currently, however, lesser quality and more widely available drums are made from coconut (*coco nucifera*).<sup>103</sup> Sheeran comments on this difference in wood quality: “Nowadays, because of restrictions on the felling of woods like *jak*, or *kos*, the low-country drum is usually made from coconut wood.”<sup>104</sup> The quality of these coconut wood drums seems acceptable for beginners' instruments in schools as well as most instrument stores that cater for tourists. However, most professional artists do not play drums made out of this wood as they do not produce the most desirable tones.

The *yak beraya* measures 27 inches (69 cm) in length, similar to the *gāṭa beraya*. The diameter of the drumhead is around 7.5 to 9 inches (19 to 23 cm). Both the drumheads of the *yak beraya* are covered with cow stomach-linings, whereas the straps along the drum

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<sup>101</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 955.

<sup>102</sup> Jinadhasa mahattaya (instrument maker), personal interview, Udugampola, Sri Lanka, 1 July 2007.

<sup>103</sup> Jinadhasa mahattaya.

<sup>104</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 961.

and the outer layer of skin consist of normal cowhide. Although the drum is not tuned to an exact pitch, the side played with the drummer's stronger hand (*sural taṭṭuva*) is slightly thinner. Therefore, this produces a higher pitch and marginally sharper tone, compared to the other side (*hai taṭṭuva*) which is slightly thicker. The terms used to refer to the various parts of the *yak beraya* are as follows:

1. *hai taṭṭuva* – the thicker drumhead. *Taṭṭuva* means a drumhead.
2. *hākma* – the outer layer of skin. This is also identified as the *kāpum hama*.
3. *bera gāṭiya* – the woven ring around the edge of the drumhead.
4. *kanvaraya* – the woven loop that attaches the waist strap to the drum.
5. *varapaṭi* – the straps that connect the two drumheads along the drum.
6. *bera kaṇḍa* – the body of the drum.
7. *borañḍaṃ raṭā* – decorations on the body of the drum.
8. *bera lanuva* – the waist strap.
9. *sural taṭṭuva* – thinner drumhead.
10. *gātivāla* – the circular cane rim around which the skin is tightened.

## 2.4 Traditional instrument making practices and attitudes

Bandara<sup>105</sup> and Rajapakse<sup>106</sup> describe the traditional instrument-making practices in connection with a number of rituals which demonstrate the sacred quality ascribed to the instrument. A number of variables were considered for the felling of a tree suitable for drum making, namely that trees grown near temples, waterfalls or trees brought down by natural causes such as lightening were preferred. Trees near cemeteries were considered

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<sup>105</sup> Bandara, *Udaraṭa Bera Vādana Kalāva*, 57-90.

<sup>106</sup> Rajapakse, *Udaraṭa Tūryavādana Purānaya*, 52-66.

particularly unsuitable. Once a suitable tree was chosen, the earth under the tree was cleaned, and offerings were made to the Gods to seek their permission. Verses and prayers were recited for up to seven days prior to the felling of the tree and carried out at a particular auspicious time according to astrology. During the construction of the instrument and after the body of the instrument was carved out, it was kept under flowing water for around seven days. It was then taken out to be dried in the shade. A paste of heated resin was coated on the inside of the drum, with the belief that this would protect the instrument from undesired, external, malevolent influences usually reserved for humans as discussed in Chapter 1. Colouring the body of the instrument is believed to have started during the Kandyan kingdom (1469-1815). The *gāṭa beraya* and the *yak beraya* were believed to be left uncoloured while the instruments such as *davula*, *tammaṭṭama*, *uddakkiya* and *rabāna* were coloured with natural paints to match the colours of wall paintings in Buddhist temples, illustrating the association of the *davula* and *tammaṭṭama* with Buddhist ceremonies (see section 1.6) which existed during this period.

The dimensions, in units of *viyat* and *aṅgul*, of the drum are traditionally described using a system of measure that concurs with an individual's hands. A *viyat* is the length from the thumb to the little finger, as the fingers are spread. An *aṅgul* is the length from the first joint above the palm, to the end of the index finger. The dimensions of the longer drums (i.e., *yak beraya* and *gāṭa beraya*) were traditionally measured at three *viyat* and three *aṅgul* in length, and one *viyat* at the diameter of the drumhead.<sup>107</sup> Measuring the dimensions to such a scale and according to the individual for whom it was intended,

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<sup>107</sup> Rajapakse, *Udaraṭa Tūryavādana Purānaya*, 67.



ensured that the drum perfectly suited the musician's body type and individualized the musician-instrument relationship.<sup>108</sup> This close relationship is further established by commentaries that suggest making of one's own instrument was considered to be the norm.<sup>109</sup>

The connection between the musician and their instrument still remains individualized and pervasively strong, even in contemporary times. An older musician, M. K. Babanis from the Sabaragamuwa tradition revealed to me that he sleeps next to his *davula* that he inherited from his father, out of respect. Practices that show general respect for instruments, include musicians putting their hands together to casually worship the instrument before and after playing. A specific pattern is traditionally associated with this gesture (see section 3.8.3). I have observed Prasantha Rupathilake casually worship the instrument as a form of respect, particularly in instances where he needs to place his feet on the drum to support it to tighten the *varapaṭa* (straps along the drum). Wegner documents a similar but a more significant practice in his study of Nāykhī drumming: “an excuse *pūjā* ... is still performed by some drum-makers after the completion of their work”<sup>110</sup>, in-case the supernatural beings are offended by the action of using the feet to support the drum.

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<sup>108</sup> Kulatilaka acknowledges this in: Kulatillake, 36.

<sup>109</sup> Rajapakse, *Udaraṭa Tūryavādana Purāṇaya*, 60.

<sup>110</sup> Wegner, *The Nāykhībājā of Bhaktapur: Studies in Newar Drumming II*, 50.

## **2.5 Construction of the *yak beraya***

The content of this section is drawn from visits made to three instrument makers. The largest of the three workshops employs around six workers and is located in Udugampola, outside the main town of Gampaha, about 30km from the capital. The variety of instruments made in this workshop ranges from traditional Sri Lankan drums to Indian and African drums. It is possible, while visiting the workshop, to observe the complete process of instrument making. However, the other two workshops are much smaller and mostly carry out the latter stages of connecting the skins to the drums. For this they rely on bringing in the carved bodies of drums. One of these workshops is located in Mathara, a southern coastal town, and is run by two siblings. The other workshop is the smallest of the three, is based at a musician's residence in Kottawa, an outer suburb of Colombo.

### **2.5.1 Preparing the body of the drum**

The preparation of the body begins with cutting a suitable log to the desired length with an electric chain-saw. At the workshop in Udugampola, the standard length of a drum is 27 inches (69 cm) and the diameter of the drumheads is a choice between 7.5, 8 or 8.5 inches (19, 20 or 22 cm), unless specified otherwise by the buyer. These measurements roughly assimilate the traditional scales mentioned above in section 2.4. During the cutting process, the bark is scraped off the log with an axe (*porava*) before it is mounted on an electric lathe. Most of the work on the outside of the body (*liyavīma*), including shaping the drum and adding the finishing touches by creating decorations (*borañdam*), is then carried out on the electric lathe as well as with the use of hand-held chisels. Once the

outer shape is completed, the inside of the drum is carved out until the thickness of the shell of the body is around half an inch. This is done first using a long, hand-held chisel known as the *älavanguva*, followed by small hand-held ones.



**Figure 8: Carving the inside of a drum with a long-chisel**

The inside surface is chiselled with marks since a rough surface is believed to create the desired amount of resonance. The inside of the drum is generally coated with an anti-insect varnish as a treatment for the wood. This purpose would have also been served with the coating of resin in the traditional instrument making process. The body of the drum is sometimes wrapped with a number of metal rings, usually made of aluminium, with the intention of protecting the wood from splitting or even as a decoration. The edges of the drum and the outer body are smoothed out using sandpaper and the drum is varnished.



**Figure 9: Prepared bodies of *yak beraya* drums**

### **2.5.2 Preparation of drum skins**

The following photographs show the process of drying animal skins to be used as drumheads at the workshop in Mathara. Cow and goat skins require preparation by instrument makers. However, cow stomach-linings are purchased from butchers, ready to be used.



**Figure 10: Animal skins stretched to be dried**

The fleshy side of the skin is coated with ash, in order to stop it from decomposing. The skin is then spread on a flat surface, thoroughly stretched, with the use of pegs or nails. The stretched skin is then dried under the sun. Once the skin is dried to satisfaction, the hair on the outside of the skin is scraped off with a sharp knife.

The *varapaṭa* (straps along the body of the drum) are cut to around quarter of an inch in width from dried cowhide. These straps hold the two outer skins of the drum together and are also used for tuning. They are cut along the outside edge of the skin, working inwards in a spiral shape, in order to get the maximum length from individual pieces. The straps are then stretched out by tying the ends to a couple of poles or trees. A slightly thinner version of *varapaṭa* is recognized as *venivara* and is used to construct the woven ring around the edge of the drumhead (*bera gātiya*). Given that these straps are intended to be smooth, extra attention is paid to smoothing them out by scraping a knife at points where rough edges are found.



**Figure 11: *Venivara* (thin straps) stretched and smoothed**



### 2.5.3 Preparation of the *häkma* (the outer layer of skin)

The *häkma* covers the playing skin around the edge of each drumhead and holds the *varapaṭi* in place, allowing the drum to be tuned. The construction of the *häkma* is described in three stages. The first stage entails that a piece of cowhide is soaked in water and placed on one end of the drum. A piece of rope is then wrapped over the skin, around the body of the drum, in order to temporarily hold the skin in place. These two steps are repeated at the other end of the drum. Sixteen holes are pierced towards the outer edge of the cowhide, below the point where the rope is tied, on both sides, and a rope is woven through the holes and pulled tight so it stretches both skins. The skins are then left to dry. This first stage is referred to as *boruvara ädīma* or ‘fake strapping’.



Figure 12: *Boruvara ädīma* (fake strapping) of the *yak beraya*

It is during the second stage that once the dried hide is moulded into the shape of the drum, then the ropes are unwrapped and taken off. At the workshop in Udugampola, the *bera gätiya* (the woven ring around the edge of the drumhead) is made without detaching the fake strapping (figure 15). Alternatively, as is done at the workshop in Kottawa, the

inside of each surface is cut out in a circular shape, leaving a gap of around half an inch from the edge of the drum. The excess hide along the body of the drum is also taken off, leaving around two inches of hide from the edge of the drum.



**Figure 13: The *häkma* with excess hide cut off**

Sixteen holes of equal distance, known as *illam* are then marked and cut on the skin on the edge of the drumhead.



**Figure 14: *Illam* (sixteen holes around the edge of the *häkma*)**

The final stage of the *häkma* entails weaving the *bera gätiya* (woven ring around the edge) onto it while it is placed on the drum. The weaving involves the insertion of two lines of *venivara* (the thin straps) through the sixteen holes, over and under, around the

*häkma*. Making a tightly packed, smooth *bera gäṭiya* is believed to be one of the most challenging tasks in the construction of the drum. It is desirable not to join pieces of *venivara* to create the *bera gäṭiya* as this would make it rough and in turn, hard on the musician's hands when playing the drum.



Figure 15: Weaving the *bera gäṭiya* (rim around the edge of drumhead)

#### 2.5.4 Placing the drumheads (*bera taṭṭu*)

The *häkma* is temporarily taken off and kept aside while the drum is dressed with the playing skin. Prior to attaching the playing skins, a bamboo ring known as the *gäṭivāla* is placed around the edge of the drum. The ring is wrapped with a strip of material to provide a better grip and tight fit.





**Figure 16: Preparation of the *gätiväla***

Following this, the chosen cow stomach-lining is soaked in water and gently scrubbed. It is then laid over the drumhead, with the rough side of the skin facing up. A piece of string is used to tightly bind the skin to the drum immediately below the *gätiväla*. The string is wrapped once around the drum at which point the skin is stretched further by pulling the excess skin, whilst wrapping it with the rest of the string.



**Figure 17: Fitting the cow-stomach lining on the *yak beraya***

The excess skin is cut off using a knife and the *häkma* is placed back on top of the drumhead.



Figure 18: Excess skin is cut off (left) and *häkma* is placed back on (right)

### 2.5.5 Attaching *kanvaraya*, *varapaṭi* and the waist-strap

When both drum heads are placed on the drum and the two *häkma* are secured, a loop that is used to attach the waist strap to the drum (*kanvaraya*) is woven through two holes made on the edge of each *häkma*. The next process is to attach the *varapaṭi* (strap along the body of the drum) to the two *häkma*. The strap is inserted through the *bera gätiya* between the points of *illam* (sixteen holes used to weave the *bera gätiya*). A knot is then tied at the starting point and the straps are woven over and under the *bera gätiya* right around the drum. The *varapaṭi* are then stretched to tune the drumheads as required. The waist-strap (*bera lanuva*) is usually synthetic and is sometimes placed in a casing of brightly coloured material in order to make it more attractive and comfortable on the musician's waist. The *bera lanuva* is measured to be roughly three times the length of the drum. The strap is inserted through the two loops of the drum (*kanvaraya*) and secured with a knot on the end of the *hai taṭṭuva*. This enables the musician to instantly recognize the two sides of the drum when preparing to play the *yak beraya*. One particular method

of tying a knot, enabling the musician to hold the drum around the waist, is illustrated in Appendix 3.

## **2.6 Tuning and maintenance of the *yak beraya***

The tuning of the drum is generally done using the palm of the hand. The drumhead is tightened by hitting the *bera gätiya* on top, towards the body of the drum, and it is loosened by hitting the *bera gätiya* on the side, away from the drum. The musicians from the Mathara sub-tradition use a wedge cut out of wood in the shape of a traditional door stopper. This tool is used because the *häkma* of the *yak beraya* in the Mathara sub-tradition is too thick and tight to be adjusted using the palm. Using the wedge, the drum is tightened in a similar manner as mentioned above, and the drumhead is loosened by placing the thinner side of the wedge under the *häkma* on the side of the drum. The breaking of the *yak beraya* drumheads is fairly common due to the thin nature of the cow stomach-lining. In order to replace a drumhead, it is recommended that only three to four loops of *varapaṭi* are removed, so that the *häkma* can be detached from the drum. When pulling the *varapaṭi*, it is recommended that the *varapaṭi* that comes under the *bera gätiya* is pulled, as pulling *varapaṭi* that comes over the *bera gätiya* risks breaking and damaging the *bera gätiya*. Removing the *häkma* may also pull out the old drumhead if it is stuck to it. In such an event, soaking the area in some water assists in separating the two segments without causing any damage to the *häkma*. The new drumhead is replaced and the *varapaṭi* are tightened after the *häkma* is then placed back on the drum. A less time-consuming approach which enlivens the sound of the drum, particularly if the drumheads are not torn, is to slightly loosen the *häkma* and dampen the drumheads by

spreading a few drops of water on the drumheads. This process is usually carried out in the afternoon of a performance night, and is considered as good as replacing drumheads. The substitution of skin parts of the drum is extremely rare. However, on one occasion during my fieldwork, I witnessed a drum in which plastic straps were used as *varapaṭi*. Sandhoris Jayantha, who was invited to play this instrument, expressed his dissatisfaction with it, as the plastic straps did not hold the tuning of the drum as well as the original skin straps.



**Figure 19: Plastic straps used for *varapaṭi***

## **2.7 Chapter summary**

Little has changed in the process of Sri Lankan drum making in comparison with traditional instrument making methods, though the use of electric tools has considerably sped up the stages of preparing the body of the drum. The abandoning of construction rituals associated with making instruments in contemporary practice, as well as the use of standard measurements, has somewhat lessened the sacred quality of the drum. Nevertheless, musicians still maintain their respect for the instrument and the drum is perceived by older artists as a tool that assists communication with the supernatural,

despite it still not being explicitly stated in the tradition. The mass production of drums has meant that the general quality of the instruments, which are available to the public, is generally poor. However, it is possible to purchase high-quality instruments made to suit individual requirements, provided that the instrument maker is aware that the buyer requires a professional instrument.

## Chapter 3

### Theory of Low-Country Drumming

A comprehensive theory of Low-Country drumming that addresses concepts such as timing, tempo, drumming techniques and patterns remains unwritten. It has been said that artists' views about timing and rhythm are associated with Hindu mythology: "the drum had its birth from the mouth of Brahma, timing from his teeth, and song from his tongue."<sup>111</sup> Others have argued that the contemporary drumming of the Low-Country cannot be examined within any existing framework, "including South Indian drum theory."<sup>112</sup> There is a Sinhala drum theory known as the *tit* system,<sup>113</sup> and Seneviratna implies that this system can be applied to all Sinhala drumming traditions.<sup>114</sup> I believe that the *tit* system is unsuitable for analysis of Low-Country drumming. Kulatillake confirms my view where he states: "The low country tradition associated with the style of *ruhunu* or *yak bera* totally discards the *tit* system. It is also the fact that the *tit* system has been formulated on the style of the *güta bera*."<sup>115</sup> This chapter elucidates a theory of drumming of the Low-Country in its own terms, whilst taking some practical aspects of playing into account. It is organized under a number of sections: drumming patterns, *akṣara* (drum syllables), basic drum strokes, advanced techniques, relationship between *akṣara* and technique, tempo and performance.

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<sup>111</sup> Seneviratna, 51.

<sup>112</sup> Sheeran, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 960. Also confirmed by Seneviratna, 51.

<sup>113</sup> The *tit* system is based on the tradition of Up-Country drumming and it primarily recognizes different meters and measures that are considered to be a framework for Up-Country drumming patterns. A detailed study of the *tit* system appears in Wijewardana, 46-125.

<sup>114</sup> "The timing of the Sinhalese drum beats is known as the *tit* system." Seneviratna, 51.

<sup>115</sup> Kulatillake, 39.

### 3.1 Drumming Patterns

Scholars consider that the Sinhala rhythm system consists of 216 fundamental drumming patterns.<sup>116</sup> One accepted interpretation is that the fundamental patterns “consist of 32 *Tālams* or rhythmic time measures, 64 *Saudam* or varieties of drum beats in salutation to Gods, 21 *Sural* or elaborations, 27 *Poḍi Sural* or rhythmic subdivisions, 15 *Vandamānam* or narratives to be played and sung as offering[s] to Buddha, 16 *Dākum At* or drum beat pieces played in the presence of a God or the King in the form of salutation, 40 *Aḍapada* or forty half beats.”<sup>117</sup> No single artist interviewed during this study claimed to know all these fundamental patterns. However, each knew a handful of these patterns that are played during specific segments of the rituals practised today. Presumably the fundamental patterns that are no longer remembered are associated with rituals that are now extinct. Thus the entire gamut of fundamental patterns is of little relevance to the contemporary drumming of the Low-Country.

Artists in the tradition recognize the drumming patterns simply as *pada* or patterns, regardless of whether the patterns are short (i.e., several beats in length) or long (i.e., lasts several minutes). The vocabulary of patterns in the Low-Country is common to both drummers and dancers of the tradition. The majority of the patterns played in the three rituals of this thesis are presented in Appendix 1 and are examined within the body of the text in Chapters 5-7. The patterns are categorized as follows:

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<sup>116</sup> Seneviratna, 52. Kulatillake, 36. Bandara, *Pahatarāṭa Bera Vādana Sampradāya*, 30. Sedaraman, 22.

<sup>117</sup> Seneviratna, 52.

- a) Short repetitive patterns that accompany vocal recitations and dance (*sarala pada*, literary means ‘simple patterns’).
- b) Decorative patterns with torches (*pañdam pada*).
- c) Sets of patterns specifically associated with segments in *devol maḍuva* (Pattini, Devol, Garā, *sāndā samayama*, *telme*, *kavi tāla*, *bisō kapa* and *kālapañdama*).
- d) Solo drumming patterns (*magul bera* and *pūjā bera*).
- e) Patterns that accompany salutations to deities (*vāñdum at*).
- f) Patterns where dancers go around in a circle (*vaṭṭam pada*).
- g) Patterns performed to seek blessings from the deities and bless the audience (*yahan dākma* and *āvaḍana padē*).
- h) Patterns played for cleansing ritual objects and ritual space (*kotal padē*, *dummala padē*, *pidēni pada*).
- i) Introductory patterns (*ārambhaka pada*).
- j) The patterns of the *bali* ritual (these will include a number of repetitive patterns and longer patterns performed as transitions, labelled *bali* patterns and transition patterns respectively).
- k) The patterns of the *tovil* ritual (these include one repetitive pattern, one *yak panti* and a number of patterns specific to the series of seven dances or the *hat pada pelapāliya*).



### 3.2 *Akṣara* (drum syllables)

Any theory of Low-Country drumming requires the introduction of the concept of the *akṣara*. The term *akṣara* literally means ‘letter’ or ‘syllable,’<sup>118</sup> and in Low-Country drumming it refers to the smallest rhythmical unit. *Akṣara* are vocalized as syllables that “represent a kind of oral notation”<sup>119</sup> of Low-Country drumming, as musicians internalize and pass down drumming patterns by memorizing their *akṣara*. Each *akṣara* must be interpreted in the context of the drumming pattern and it generally refers to a combination of stroke, timing and timbre. Other drumming cultures use similar systems as suggested by musicologist, Robert Brown: “In highly developed practices of drumming, such as are found in Africa and India, the performer tends to symbolize his rhythmic patterns of sound in terms of vocal syllables.”<sup>120</sup> For example, in Indian music, the vocal syllables are called *bol* in the North and *solkaṭṭu* in the South.<sup>121</sup>

Seneviratna claims that Sinhala drumming consists of five basic syllables, “*tat, jit, ton, nan, ta*” which he collectively terms *pañcatāla*.<sup>122</sup> However, both drummers and dancers in the Low-Country tradition recognize only four primary *akṣara* called *tat, dit, toṃ* and *naṃ*;<sup>123</sup> the following analysis adapts this latter framework. The four primary *akṣara* when singled out are produced by four distinct strokes on the *yak beraya*. These strokes

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<sup>118</sup> Somapala Jayawardhana, “Sinhala-English Dictionary,” ed. Somapala Jayawardhana (Colombo: Godage and Brothers, 2002).

<sup>119</sup> Ter Ellingson, “Ancient Indian Drum Syllables and Bu Ston’s Sham Pa Ta Ritual,” *Ethnomusicology* 24.3 (1980) 431.

<sup>120</sup> Ellingson, 431.

<sup>121</sup> Ellingson, 431.

<sup>122</sup> Seneviratna, 51. *Jit* replaces *dit* in the Up-Country tradition of drumming.

<sup>123</sup> This is consistent with the four basic syllables (*tha, dhi, thom, na*) identified in the theory of the south Indian *mridangam* in V.P.K Sundaram, *The Art of Drumming*, trans. V. Murugan, 1st ed. (Madras: Institute of Asian Studies, 1988) 7.

are often referred by the *akṣara* they produce when played in this way, i.e. *tat* stroke, *dit* stroke, *tom* stroke and *nam* stroke. This study collectively refers to these four strokes as the ‘four basic strokes.’

### 3.3 Four basic strokes of *tat*, *dit*, *tom*, *nam*

The *tat* and *tom* strokes are produced from the *hai taṭṭuva* (thicker drumhead). This side of the drum is played by the drummer’s weaker hand. *Dit* and *nam* are produced from the *sural taṭṭuva* (thinner drumhead) which is played by the drummer’s stronger hand. *Tat* is produced by slapping the skin of the drum, using all fingers except the thumb, on the middle of the drumhead. The thumb is kept out of the way and the palm rests on the edge of the drum at the point of contact. The stroke is played with relaxed fingers allowing the finger tips to spring off the drumhead after contact. *Nam* is produced in a similar manner but on the opposite drumhead. Because of this *tat* and *nam* sound very similar. When playing *tat*, experienced drummers often slightly muffle the opposite drumhead with two fingertips, in order to better differentiate the two sounds.



*tat*



*dit*



*tom*



*nam*

**Figure 20: Four basic strokes that produce the four basic *akşara***

*Tom* is played using all fingers, except the thumb, towards the edge of the drum. Considered to be the strongest sound of the drum, *tom* is a bass sound which is allowed to resonate. *Dit* too is played in a similar fashion on the edge of the drum, however, is a weaker, muffled sound produced by resting the fingers on the skin after playing the stroke.

### **3.4 Flick-thumb technique**

Aside from these four primary *akşara*, there are many other *akşara* that make up the drumming patterns of the Low-Country. Another essential drumming technique combines two strokes to produce sequences of some of these other *akşara*. As artists do not identify this technique using any particular name, it will be labelled for this analysis as the ‘flick-thumb’ technique. The ‘flick-thumb’ technique is not strongly associated with any particular pair of *akşara*, but instead it is used to produce several combinations of *akşara*.



**Figure 21: Flick-thumb technique**

The flick-thumb technique is played using the drummer's stronger hand on the *sural taṭṭuva*. Its first stroke is played using the first four fingers, with a flicking motion, towards the body, turning the palm upwards while rolling the wrist. The second is played by the thumb, away from the body, while rotating the wrist the opposite way, turning the palm downwards. The wrist is kept very relaxed and used as a pivot point for the rotation.

### **3.5 Advanced hand techniques**

The advanced techniques presented in this section are not taught explicitly in the tradition. They are implicitly learnt and only seen to be used by the most experienced drummers. The techniques highlight various subtle sounds of the drum and are most extensively heard in the drumming of *bali* rituals, and feature to a lesser extent in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. Six of the advanced techniques are identified through this study. These have been named for the purpose of discussion and described below.

- 1) Finger-flick: This stroke is usually played on the *sural taṭṭuva* and it is a flick using the index and middle fingers, played towards the edge of the drum using the player's stronger hand. Similar to when playing the basic strokes, the thumb is kept out of the way and rested on the *bera gāṭiya* (edge of the drumhead).



**Figure 22: Advanced technique 1 (finger-flick)**

- 2) Light stroke on the edge of the drumhead: This stroke is played lightly with all fingers, except the thumb, towards the edge of the drum. It is played on the *sural taṭṭuva* and is identified by the artists as a *kannilama* (filler-stroke) when it is used in patterns played at slow tempos. However, when used in playing repetitive patterns to accompany singing, it often acts as a quieter replacement for the *tat* stroke. This technique produces a similar sound to the finger-flick mentioned above, but they are used at different points when drumming. The light stroke on the edge is generally used at points where the strokes that follow are relatively simple, as fast sub-divisions are easier to play after the finger-flick.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Prasantha Rupathilake, personal interview, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka, 21 July 2008.



**Figure 23: Advanced technique 2 (light stroke on edge of drumhead)**

- 3) Pitch bending using one finger: This is one of two techniques used to manipulate and bend the pitch of a sound produced by an *akṣara*. It is played either on the same or opposite side of the drum immediately after a stroke is played. The technique is mostly used to manipulate the pitch of *tom* and *dit* strokes using either the ring or middle finger rubbed along the surface of the drum.



**Figure 24: Advanced technique 3 (pitch bending using one finger)**

- 4) Pitch bending using the palm: The second technique of pitch bending involves rubbing the whole palm along the drumhead immediately after an *akṣara* is produced. It is used in a similar context as the previous technique. However, this technique is preferred when playing at higher volumes and faster tempos.



**Figure 25: Advanced technique 4 (pitch bending using the palm)**

- 5) Flick-forefinger technique: This technique is a quieter version of the flick-thumb technique, and the only difference is that the second stroke of this technique uses the forefinger instead of the thumb. The rolling of the wrists is done in the same manner as playing the flick-thumb technique. This technique is chosen to play rolls and quicker note subdivisions when accompanying vocal recitations that need to be heard. Drummers prefer the flick-thumb technique when playing at higher volumes or accompanying solely the dance, as it allows the drummer to produce a stronger, heavier roll compared to the flick-forefinger technique.





**Figure 26: Advanced technique 5 (flick-forefinger)**

- 6) Taps: Subtle taps on the opposite drumhead to which a stroke is played add texture to a pattern. These taps are comparable to ‘flams’ in the Western percussion terminology, and are mostly only seen used in the indoor rituals.



**Figure 27: Advanced technique 5 (flick-forefinger)**

As the above six techniques are not directly taught, no strict rules are associated with their use. Experienced performers tend to develop their own subtle unique individual styles and freely choose the exact techniques according to their preference.



### 3.6 The relationship between *akṣara* and technique

It is important to recognize that a number of different *akṣara* can be produced by the same stroke. Also, some *akṣara* themselves can be produced by different strokes, depending on features such as phrase placement, rhythmic pattern, duration and timbre. For example, the *akṣara ta* can be produced by the *tat* stroke or the *naṃ* stroke. The *tat* stroke can also be used to produce the *akṣara ga, ka* and *dä*. The table below shows various *akṣara* that can be produced by the four basic strokes. Emphasized are *akṣara* that can be produced by more than one stroke.

Stroke	<i>Akṣara</i>
<i>Tat</i>	<i>gat, <b>tat</b>, <b>ta</b>, ga, dä, <b>ka</b>, da, <b>ṭa</b>, ki</i>
<i>Dit</i>	<i><b>dī</b>, dit, ti, tit</i>
<i>toṃ</i>	<i>guṃ, gu, <b>dī</b></i>
<i>naṃ</i>	<i><b>ta, tat, taṃ, hiṃ, de, ṇda, ṇdaṃ, <b>ṭa</b>, ka</b></i>

Table 1: Examples of *akṣara* produced by the four basic strokes

This seemingly complex relationship between *akṣara* and technique is not explicitly addressed in the tradition, and as a result, understanding it remains a significant challenge faced by the novice who approaches the learning of the *yak beraya*. Students often take a number of years in close association with an experienced teacher until they completely understand this relationship between *akṣara* and technique. I discuss this *akṣara*-technique relationship through a framework I propose below and label ‘*akṣara*-cells.’

There are two *akṣara*-cells consisting of two *akṣara* each, from which a variety of *akṣara* sequences can be built. Sequences grown from the same cell may have different rhythms and durations, however they are produced using similar techniques. Most sequences of *akṣara* that appear in drumming patterns can be identified as representations of one of these two *akṣara*-cells. Furthermore, a set of rules on the techniques used to produce *akṣara* in one *akṣara*-cell can be applied to all *akṣara* sequences that are representative of this *akṣara*-cell. The concept of *akṣara*-cells is illustrated below with reference to these two cells. For the purpose of this analysis I have named these ‘cell-1’ and ‘cell-2’ respectively.

### 3.6.1 Cell-1

Cell-1, in its simplest form consists of two strokes, a *tat* stroke followed by a *naṁ* stroke. Examples of *akṣara* sequences that are produced by cell-1 in its basic form are: *ga ta*, *gat tat*, *gat taṁ*, *ga tat*, *ga taṁ*, *gat ta*. The differences between most of these are in terms of rhythm. The sequences ending with *tat* and *taṁ* are similar, the only difference being that *taṁ* is allowed to ring whereas *tat* is muffled using fingertips as described in section 3.3. The particular instance of the cell-1, *ga taṁ*, is also known as *dä hiṁ* and these two are referred to interchangeably by practitioners in some contexts.

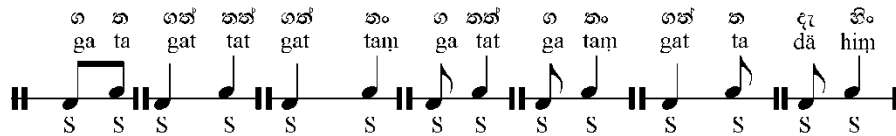


Figure 28: Cell-1 *akṣara* sequences in simplest form

Cell-1 can be expanded in four ways to create a number of other *akṣara* sequences and these four scenarios are listed below:

- 1) **An *akṣara* added to the start of cell-1:** In such an instance, the added *akṣara* can be one of *ga*, *de* or *di*. The *akṣara* *ga* in this event is produced by another *tat* stroke. *De* is produced by a *naṁ* stroke and *di* is produced with a *dit* stroke. Examples: *gat ga ta*, *de ga ta*, *de ga tat* and *di ga taṁ*. At times the last *akṣara* of the cell is omitted if the *akṣara* is a *de*. Example: *de ga*.

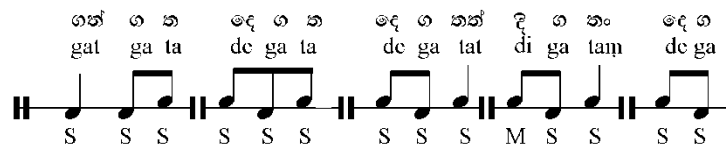


Figure 29: Cell-1 *akṣara* sequences with *akṣara* added to the start

- 2) ***Akṣara* added to the middle of cell-1:** This is most often *di* or *ti* *akṣara* which in this context are produced by the *dit* stroke. A *ga* may be inserted after the *dit* stroke and this is produced by a *gat* stroke. Examples: *ga di ta*, *ga ti ta*, *ga dit ta*, *ga tit ta*, *ga di ga ta*, *ga di ga taṁ*.



Figure 30: Cell-1 *akṣara* sequences with *akṣara* added to the middle

- 3) **An *akṣara* added to the end of cell-1:** If the added *akṣara* is produced with a *naṁ* stroke it is referred to by *ta*. It is a *ka* if produced with a *tat* stroke, and *ku* if produced by a *toṁ* stroke. Examples: *ga taṁ ta*, *dä hiṁ ta*, *ga ta ka*, *ga ta ku*.



Figure 31: Cell-1 *akşara* sequences with *akşara* added to the end

- 4) **Akşara added to both middle and end of cell-1:** The added *akşara* follow the same principles presented in 2) and 3) above. Example: *ga di ta ka*, *ga ti ta ka*, *ga di ta ku*, *ga ti ta ku*.



Figure 32: Cell-1 *akşara* sequences with *akşara* added to middle and end

### 3.6.2 Cell-2

Cell-2 in its basic form is a *tom* stroke followed by a *nam* stroke. Examples of sequences of *akşara* in their basic form are: *gu ŋda*, *guŋ ŋdam*, *gu ŋdam*, *gu ŋdat*, *guŋ ŋda*.

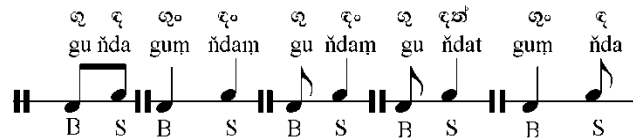


Figure 33: Cell-2 *akşara* sequences in their simplest form

Like cell-1, cell-2 can be expanded in five ways to create other sequences of *akşara*:

- 1) **An *akṣara* added to the start of cell-2:** This is one of three *akṣara*: *gu*, *de* or *di*, produced by a *tom* stroke, a *naṁ* stroke or a *dit* stroke respectively. Examples: *gu gu ṅda*, *gu gu ṅdaṁ*, *de gu ṅda*, *de gu ṅdaṁ*, *de gu ṅdat*, *di gu ṅda*. Similar to the cell-1, at times the last *akṣara* of the cell is omitted if the added *akṣara* is a *de*. Example: *de gu*.

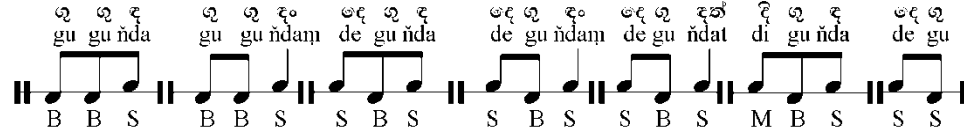


Figure 34: Cell-2 *akṣara* sequences with *akṣara* added to the start

- 2) **An *akṣara* added to the end of cell-2:** If the *akṣara* added to the end of the cell is produced by a *tat* stroke it is a *ka*. If it is produced by a *tom* stroke it is a *ku*, and a *ta* if produced with a *naṁ* stroke. Examples: *gu ṅda ka*, *gu ṅda ku*, *gu ṅdaṁ ta*.



Figure 35: Cell-2 *akṣara* sequences with *akṣara* added to the end

- 3) ***Akṣara* added to the middle of cell-2:** If a *dit* stroke is added to the middle of the *guṁ-ṅda* cell, the *ṅda* *akṣara* becomes a *ta*. Examples: *gu ṅdi ta*, *gu ṅdit ta*. These groups of *akṣara* also exist without the *ta* at the end. Examples: *gu ṅdi*, *gu ṅdit*.



Figure 36: Cell-2 *akṣara* sequences with *akṣara* added to the middle

- 4) **Akşara added to both middle and end of cell-2:** The added *akşara* follow the same principles in 2) and 3) above. Examples: *gu ŋdi ta ka*, *gu ŋdi ta ku*.

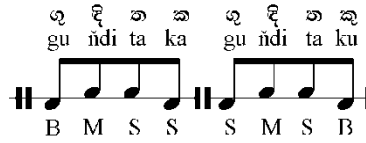


Figure 37: Cell-2 *akşara* sequences with *akşara* added to the middle and end

- 5) **The first *akşara* of the cell-2 is modified:** Artists in the tradition recognize that a *tom* stroke played in unison with a *nam* stroke produces a *dom* *akşara*. The two same strokes if played a fraction after each other produce a *dim*. In this form of the cell-2, where the first *akşara* is either a *dom* or a *dim*, the second *akşara*, produced by a *nam*, is a *ta*. Examples: *dom ta*, *dim ta*. The *akşara* sequence *dom ta* can be expanded by adding a *ka* or a *ku* to the end, produced by a *tat* or *tom* stroke respectively. Examples: *dom ta ka*, *dom ta ku*.

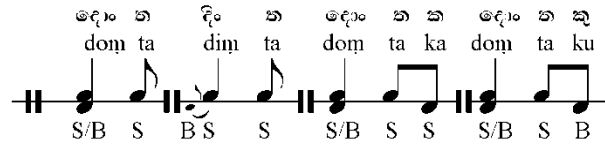


Figure 38: Cell-2 *akşara* sequences with the first *akşara* modified

The two *akşara*-cells (cell-1 and cell-2) provide an account for the techniques that produce most of the *akşara* sequences in the Low-Country drumming vocabulary. The remaining six types of *akşara* sequences presented below, cannot be linked with an *akşara*-cell as they are specialized and contain *akşara* produced by the flick-thumb technique.

### 3.6.3 Akşara sequences produced by the flick-thumb technique

These sequences of *akşara*, unlike the ones that represent *akşara*-cells, are always played using the same strokes and rhythm. The flick-thumb is technically two strokes but in the first two examples is referred to by one *akşara*.

1) *tari, diri*

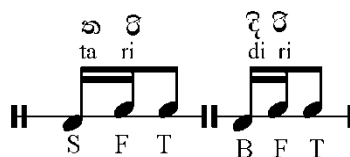


Figure 39: Flick-thumb technique *akşara* sequences 1

2) *tarda, tardaka*

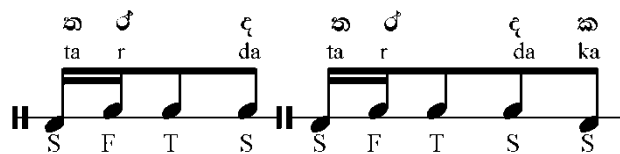


Figure 40: Flick-thumb technique *akşara* sequences 2

3) *Ta ka ta* and *di ka ta*. These two sequences of *akşara* are also known as *ga hi di* and *gu hi di* respectively.



Figure 41: Flick-thumb technique *akşara* group 3

4) *ta ri ki ta, gu hi di ga di ri ki ta, ki ti ta ka*



Figure 42: Flick-thumb technique *akşara* group 4

- 5) One of the four basic strokes followed by *ka ṭa*. I.e. *tat ka ṭa*, *dit ka ṭa*, *tom ka ṭa*, *naṁ ka ṭa*

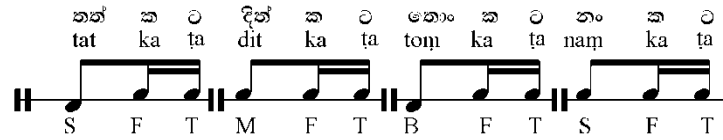


Figure 43: Flick-thumb technique *akṣara* group 5

- 6) Roll or *surala*. Examples: *re*, *riṁ*, *ru ṇda*, *ru ṇdaṁ*

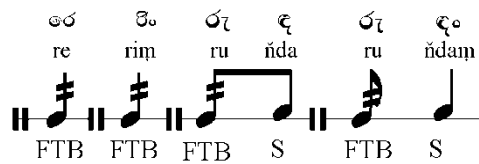


Figure 44: Flick-thumb technique *akṣara* group 6

Rolls are played by the repetition of a fast triplet, starting with the flick-thumb technique followed by a *tom* stroke. Subtle differences exist between the different rolls. In *re*, the last bass stroke is muffled to end the roll. In *riṁ*, a *tat* stroke is played immediately after the last bass stroke. In *ru ṇda* and *ru ṇdaṁ*, the rolls end with a ringing *tom* stroke.

### 3.7 Tempo

Artists in the tradition identify three general tempos known as *bara*, *haraṁba* and *kaḍinam* and these are broadly translated as slow, medium and fast. However, considering the literal meanings of the terms reveals that the tempos primarily reflect expression and aesthetic qualities of the drumming rather than specific ranges of metronomic speeds. *Bara* literally translates as ‘heavy’, *haraṁba* (more formally *saraṁba*) as ‘rudiments’ or ‘exercises’, and *kaḍinam* as ‘quick and lively’. Drumming patterns played at the *bara* tempo are recognized as having the most expressive power, as



the drumming at this tempo often does not consist of a regular beat.<sup>125</sup> The *haraṁba* is the most commonly used tempo. Drumming at the *kaḍinam* tempo sometimes finds the dancers in a state of trance.

### 3.8 Performance

This section presents three practical aspects drawn from my hands-on learning of the drumming as well as discussions and observation made during the fieldwork of this study. These issues are posture, relaxation and rudimentary exercises.

#### 3.8.1 Posture

Three common positions are adapted by the drummers when playing the *yak beraya*. At the *devol maḍuva* ritual it is most common to see the drummers perform standing. The *bali* ritual sees the drummer sitting cross-legged on the floor, whereas in the *tovil* both these positions are adopted during the ritual. In most informal settings such as for teaching and practising, drummers sit on a chair. When standing, the drum is secured by a strap around the waist as discussed in Chapter 3. Drummers usually tilt the drum so that the *sural taṭṭuva* (drumhead played by the stronger hand) is slightly lower than the *hai taṭṭuva* (drumhead played by the weaker hand). This is in order to relax the shoulder and hand that plays the flick-thumb technique. The musician's leg on the side of the *hai taṭṭuva* is often placed slightly more forward than the other, and the knee bent to a small degree, in order to rest the drum on the forward thigh muscle and relieve stress on the

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<sup>125</sup> Confirmed by Sandhoris Jayantha as quoted in: Nirosha Goonetilleke, "Raigama Sandhoris Jayantha Kalākaruvan Visin Pahatarāṭa Bera Vādanayaṭa Hā Nartanayē Pravardanaya Kerehi Sidukala Sēvāva Pilibaṇḍa Āgayīmak [An Appraisal of the Services Rendered by the Great Artist Sandhoris Jayantha of Raigama for the Development of Low-Country Drumming and Dancing]," Hons Diss. (University of Kelaniya, 1993) 26.

back when playing for long periods. When sitting, the drum is usually left unsecured and resting on the floor.

### **3.8.2 Relaxation**

I discussed the concept of relaxation informally with Sandhoris Jayantha who said that being relaxed in the whole upper body, including shoulders, arms and chest while drumming, is imperative in order to drum expressively, as well as enhancing the groove and physically being able to play for long periods. Jayantha recognizes that at this ultimate state of performing, i.e. being extremely relaxed, the drum becomes a part of his body and the physical energy felt from the sound of his own drumming and the connection with dancer he accompanies, allows him to continually play for many hours without feeling any physical pain or stress on his body. The concept of relaxation while playing is not recognized by a single term in Low-Country drumming, simply because a suitable term in Sinhala does not exist. The closest term in the language is *sāhālluvīma*,<sup>126</sup> but this was felt by Sandhoris Jayantha as being too unrelated to the context of drumming.

### **3.8.3 Rudimentary exercises (*saramba*)**

Sandhoris Jayantha explains that “communicating expressively on the *yak beraya* can be only successfully achieved by first developing the physical skills of playing the instrument.”<sup>127</sup> The traditional method of training requires the practice of twelve

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<sup>126</sup> Jayantha understands this term to mean ‘lighten.’ He feels it is too strongly associated with mental relaxation and mediation: Sandhoris Jayantha, personal interview, Hokandara, Sri Lanka, 15 May 2007.

<sup>127</sup> Quoted in: Goonetilleke, 26.

rudiments or *saramba*. Prior to this, the student is taught how to produce the four basic strokes correctly. For instance, as mentioned in section 3.3, a perfect *tom* stroke consists of a deep bass sound which is allowed to resonate and is considered impure if it is mixed with any undesirable high-pitched sounds. In contrast *tat* and *nam* should not contain any dominating bass sounds, as these strokes are intended to be high-pitched, snappy sounds. During the early stages of my drumming lessons, emphasis was placed on producing these pure sounds. Suggestions were made to adjust the hand positions at instances where an undesired sound was produced.

Jayantha described that when he was a student, his teacher expected him to be highly competent with the twelve *saramba* exercises before he was taught any drumming patterns. However, during his time as a teacher, Jayantha adapted his own teaching method, where he introduced certain *saramba* exercises, intermittently with other patterns, to his students. He claimed that this was more suitable for today's environment where novice students are unable to dedicate unlimited time to practice, compared with his own period of being a student. Yet another learning environment was identified during this study. Susantha Rupathilake, a highly competent drummer, admitted that he did not go through any of the *saramba* exercises, rather he learnt purely through imitation of patterns. Thus the *saramba* exercises should be viewed only as one way of learning Low-Country drumming.

The twelve *saramba* (Appendix 6, track 1) as learnt by Jayantha are as follows:

1)



Figure 45: *Saramba 1*

This first *saramba* serves as a foundation for the roll (*surala*<sup>128</sup>). By practising this rudiment, the student develops the fluent rotational wrist movement of the flick-thumb technique. The clarity, strength and the speed of a drummer's *surala* often provides a good measurement of the drummer's standard of technique.

2)

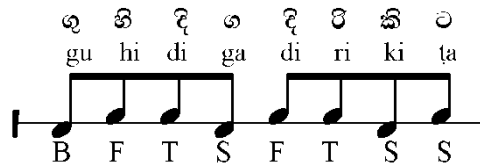


Figure 46: *Saramba 2*

The second *saramba* is an *akṣara* sequence that appears often in longer drumming patterns (this was identified under section 3.6.3).

3)

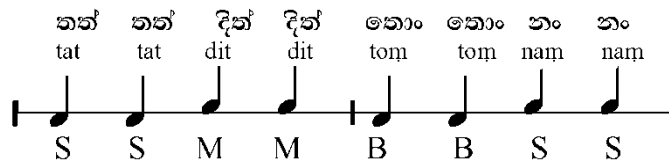


Figure 47: *Saramba 3*

<sup>128</sup> The term *surala* also refers to a type of pattern.

The third *saramba* reemphasizes the importance of being able to produce the four basic strokes correctly.

4)

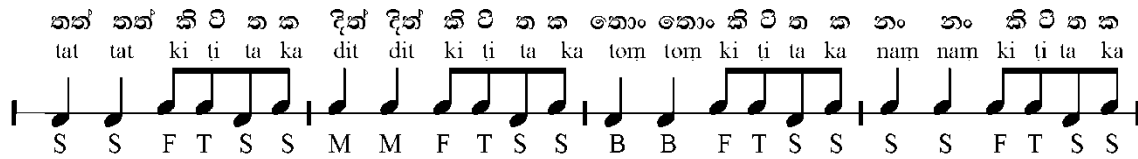


Figure 48: *Saramba 4*

The fourth *saramba* introduces the *akṣara* sequence *ki ti ta ka*, which is played alternatively with the four basic strokes.

5)

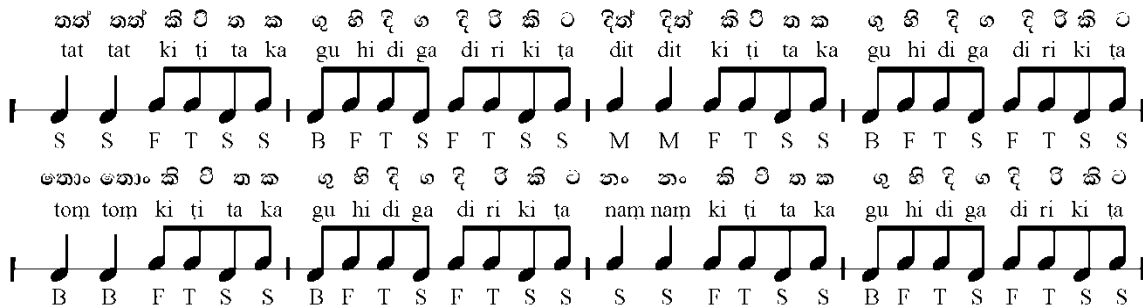


Figure 49: *Saramba 5*

The fifth *saramba* is a combination of rudiments 2 and 4 above.

6)

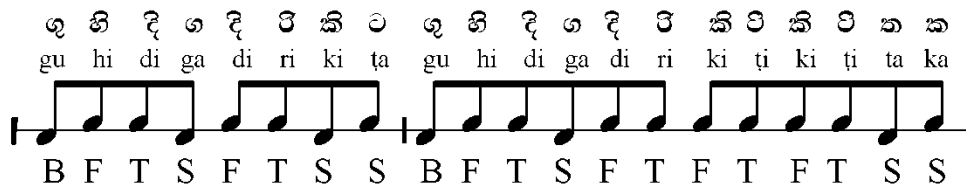


Figure 50: *Saramba 6*

The sixth *saramba* purely addresses the use of the flick-thumb technique, as seen by the last *akşara* sequence of the exercise (*ki ti ki ti ta ka*) which rarely appears in the drumming outside of this *saramba*.

7)

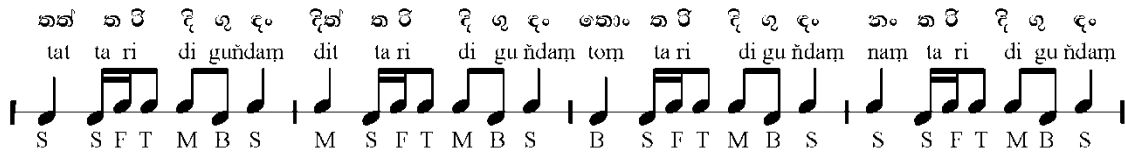


Figure 51: *Saramba 7*

The seventh *saramba* introduces two *akşara* sequences, *ta ri* and *di gu ñdam* and presents these in an exercise that is played with each of the four basic strokes. The desired sound of *tari* is only achieved when it is played rushed.

8)

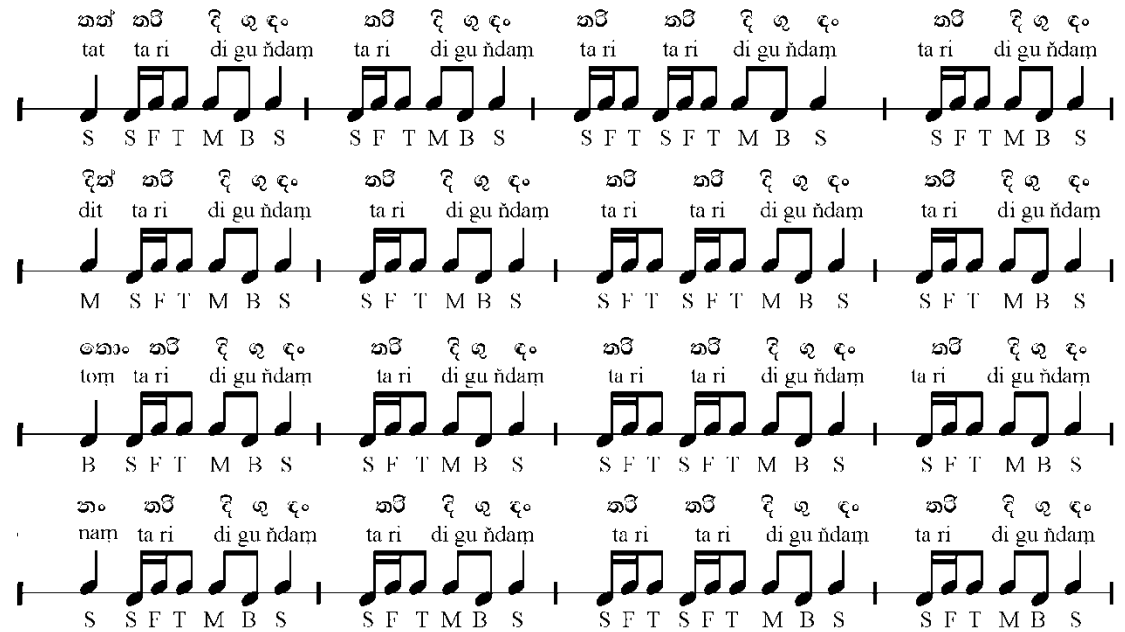


Figure 52: *Saramba 8*

The eighth rudiment is an extension of the previous *saramba*. This exercise introduces the student to play in a pulse of seven (i.e., four beats followed by three). Both the student and the teacher are often unaware that the pattern is in seven, as they think in terms of *akṣara* sequences.

9)

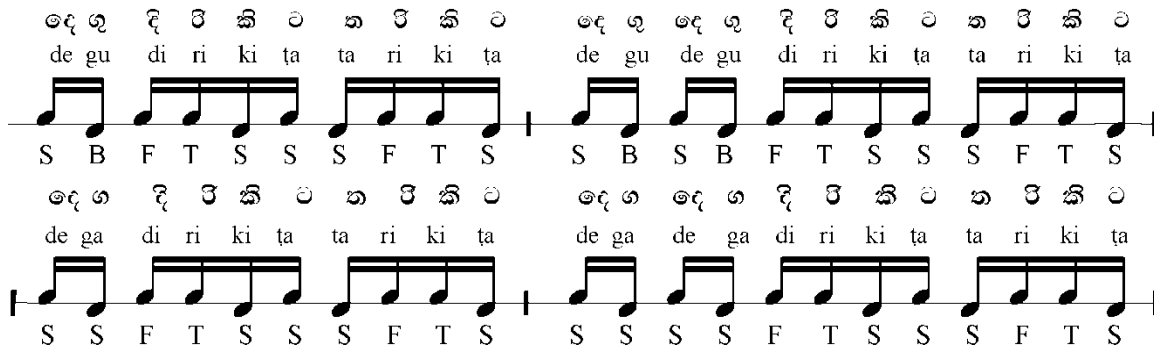


Figure 53: *Saramba 9*

The ninth *saramba* introduces the *akṣara* groups *de ga* and *de gu*. These are combined with two common *akṣara* sequences produced by the flick-thumb technique.

10)

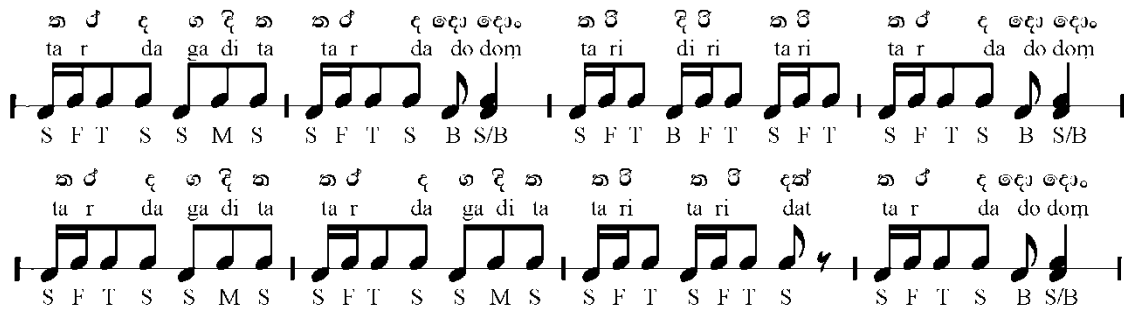


Figure 54: *Saramba 10*

The tenth *saramba* contains the *akṣara* sequences, *tarda* and *dom*. Similar to *tari* in the seventh *saramba*, *tarda* is required to be played rushed. As mentioned in section 3.6.2, *dom* is produced by *tom* and *nam* strokes played in unison.

11)

රිං ගත් තර් ද ක රිං ග ත තර් ද ක රිං ගත් රිං ග ත ගත් රිං දො. තර් ද ක  
 rim gat ta r da ka rim ga ta ta r da ka rim gat rim ga ta gat rim dom ta r da ka  
 FTB S S F T S S FTB S S S F T S S FTB S FTB S S S FTB S/B S F T S S  
 කි ටි ත ක තර් ද ක කි ටි ත ක ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ටි ත තර් ද ක  
 ki ti ta ka ta r da ka ki ti ta ka gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ta r da ka  
 F T S S S F T S S F T S S B F T S F T S S S F T S S

Figure 55: *Saramba 11*

This *saramba* introduces the roll (*surala*) in the context of a pattern among other *akṣara* sequences played in previous rudiments. The student is encouraged to lengthen the duration of the roll and it is accepted that this duration varies each time.

12)

රු ද ගු ද ගු දි ත ගු ද ගත් තං ග ත ග ත ග ති ත ග ත ගත් තම්  
 ru ñda gu ñda gu ñdi ta gu ñda gat tam ga ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta gat tam  
 FTB S B S B M S B S S S S S S S S M S S S S S  
 රු ද ගු ද ගු දි ත ග ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත ගු දි ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත  
 ru ñda gu ñda gu ñdi ta ga ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta gu ñdi ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta  
 FTB S B S B M S S S S S S M S S S B M S S S S M S S S S

Figure 56: *Saramba 12*

The final *saramba* is one of the most challenging of the twelve. The exercise is made up from *akṣara* sequences that are of varying lengths. The student is encouraged to bend the pitch of the *ñdi akṣara* of the exercise using advanced technique 3.

The practice of *saramba* is also associated with a *namaskāra pada* (worship pattern) which accompanies the act of worshipping the drum as a sign of respect to the instrument



and the art form (mentioned in section 2.4). Traditionally, the following pattern is played three times at the end of a practice session.



Figure 57: Worship pattern played at the end of a practice session

### 3.9 Chapter summary

An *akṣara* (drum syllable) represents the smallest metrical unit of rhythm in Low-Country drumming. Each *akṣara* must be interpreted in the context of the drumming pattern and generally refers to a combination of stroke, timing and timbre. The drumming patterns are made up of many sequences of *akṣara*, produced using a limited number of techniques on the *yak beraya*. Four basic strokes and the ‘flick-thumb’ technique, produce all the *akṣara* sequences seen in the drumming patterns. Several advanced techniques exist, however they are only used in embellishment and do not produce separate *akṣara* sequences. The limited number of techniques used to produce the *akṣara* sequences entails that a number of different *akṣara* can be produced by the same stroke. Also particular *akṣara* themselves can be produced using different strokes. This complex relationship between technique and *akṣara* is not explicitly recognized in the tradition, and hence generally not understood by the novice for a number of years. This relationship is explored in this chapter through a concept proposed as ‘*akṣara*-cells.’

Low-Country artists recognize three general tempos *bara*, *haramba* and *kaḍinam* as slow, medium and fast. However, the meaning of the terms reveals that the tempos also refer to

certain aesthetic qualities of the drumming over specific speeds. Relaxation, when drumming is not a concept explicitly recognized in the tradition. However, it is considered imperative to perform with expression. Experienced artists recognize that communication through drumming is possible once the necessary physical skills are developed. One way to develop these skills is the practice of the twelve rudimentary exercises (*saramba*).

## Chapter 4

### The *Devol Mađuva* Ritual

Because the *devol mađuva* is the most expansive ritual of the Low-Country, the study of its drumming provides a strong basis for understanding the vocabulary of patterns and significant features of Low-Country drumming. Creating a comprehensive collection of drumming patterns in a ritual which is performed for well over twelve hours is a demanding task. This explains why the music of the ritual has remained undocumented. This chapter responds to this challenge by presenting selective patterns of the *devol mađuva* ritual. A more extensive collection of the patterns appears in Appendix 1. While providing an appreciation of the range of vocabulary, the transcription of drumming patterns within this chapter, aims to identify particular features of timing that contribute towards the expressive nature of the drumming. As the ritual is held outdoors, the dynamics of drumming remain relatively constant and loud throughout. The fact that there is a larger group of drummers, whose range of experience differs, means that improvisation in this ritual is minimal. The analysis of the drumming patterns will show common compositional features and structures and also how the different patterns relate to each other. The analysis will also highlight the relationship of drumming to other performance elements of dance and singing. The performance descriptions of some segments of the ritual reveal hidden characteristics of the music and the change that is occurring in the ritual.

The different segments of the ritual are organized under the structure presented in the ritual background in Chapter 1. The initial segments will describe detailed explanations

of repetitive and short patterns in order to familiarize the reader with the norms of this ritual's performance. As details of ritualistic procedures, ritual texts<sup>129</sup> and performance costumes could constitute papers on their own, descriptions of these aspects are given only in order to provide the context for drumming patterns being discussed.

The delivery style of vocal recitations of text in the ritual is mentioned in order to show the connection between the voice and drumming. In the ritual performance, the drummers and the dancers generally sing in a 'call and response' style, alternating the lines of a verse between each other. The different singing styles are identified and presented in the table below, which follows ethnomusicologist Andrew Alter's presentation of the different vocal delivery styles of musicians from Garhwal.<sup>130</sup> This table will also be used as a basis for documenting the singing style of the other two rituals discussed in this thesis.

Vocal delivery style	Text	Range	Drums	Dance
Pitched Recitation A (PR-A)	text set to the musical metre of a repetitive pattern	3-4 semitones	yes	most occasions
Pitched Recitation B (PR-B)	lines of verses are short, these are lengthened to fit the musical metre of a repetitive pattern, recognized as <i>keṭi kavi</i>	3-4 semitones	yes	yes
Pitched Recitation C (PR-C)	no text, melody is sung using sounds of <i>tā</i> and <i>nā</i> , set to musical metre of repetitive pattern, identified as <i>tānam</i> singing	3-4 semitones	yes	yes
Pitched Recitation D (PR-D)	no text, melody is sung using sounds of <i>tā</i> and <i>nā</i> , set to longer patterns with an irregular beat	3-4 semitones	yes	yes
Pitched Recitation E (PR-E)	not set to a metrical metre, texts generally are in honour of the Three Refuges	3-4 semitones	none	none

<sup>129</sup> An extensive textual analysis of a variant of this ritual is carried out by Obeyesekere.

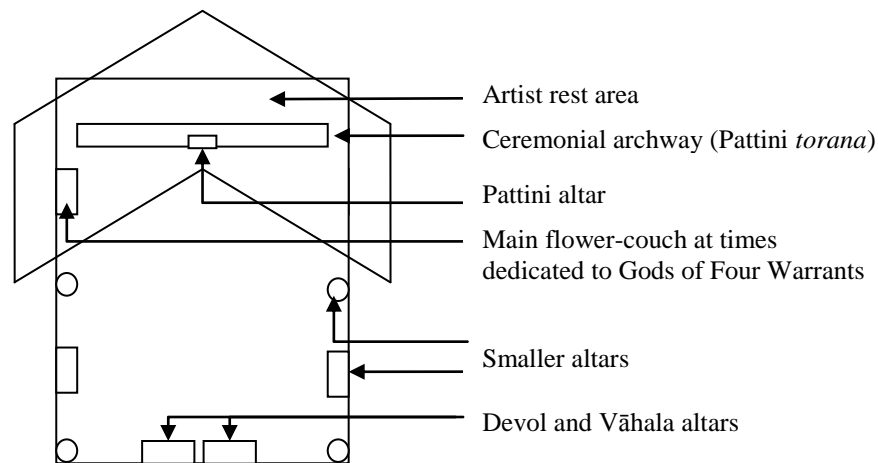
<sup>130</sup> Alter, 183.

Pitched Recitation F (PR-F)	text set to musical metre of repetitive pattern, only occurs in <i>bali</i> ritual	10 semitones	yes	yes
Unpitched Recitation A (UPR-A)	Unmetrical. Text recited with attack, only in offerings in <i>tovil</i> and <i>bali</i> rituals	none	yes	none

**Table 2: Vocal delivery styles in Low-Country rituals**

## 4.1 The ritual space

A brief overview of the physical set up of the ritual space of the *devol maḍuva* is illustrated in the following diagram prior to the presentation of drumming in each segment. The earth inside the ritual space is covered in a thin layer of sand in order to create a suitable performing surface for the dancers.



**Figure 58: Ritual space of *devol maḍuva***

The ceremonial archway (Pattini *torana*), being the most elaborate ritual structure is dedicated to the goddess Pattini. At the centre of the Pattini *torana* is an altar presented to the deity. This altar remains covered with a white curtain until it is unveiled during the *toran yāgaya* segment of the ritual.



**Figure 59: Ceremonial archway of Pattini in *devol maḍuva***

The two altars directly opposite the main altar are dedicated to the deities Devol and Vāhala. A number of smaller altars are built along the boundary of the ritual space. The deities for whom these are offered vary among rituals, whereas some function purely as altars in which offerings of flowers and lights are placed. The altar on the side of the ceremonial archway is the main flower-couch and this is at times offered to the Gods of Four Warrants. The roof which covers the area of the archway is designed such that no support poles are needed at the centre of the ritual space.

#### **4.2 Cutting of the *milla* tree (*milla kăpīma*)**

A rite performed either at the start of the ritual or just prior to the Devol segment, depending on the head priest's preference, is the cutting of the *milla* tree. It is “an independent rite performed for the purpose of collecting the wood for the fire-walking

ritual”<sup>131</sup> in the dance of Devol segment which appears later in the ritual. The segment lasts around half an hour and involves one dancer, one drummer, the *koṭṭoruvā* (official ritual assistant) and an additional chanter. The performers are inside the ritual space initially, as the dancer begins the recitation of verses (PR-A) with an introductory pattern labelled *ārambhaka pada-A* (Appendix 6, tracks 2-3). All dance performances commence with an introductory pattern. The same patterns also function as endings for dance performances. Several of these exist and some, such as this one, appear in many segments. Others however, are only specific to one or two segments. Introductory patterns, in particular their endings, are usually played quickly and this makes the beat of the pattern illusive.

Another feature of introductory patterns is the irregular nature of the pulse. This applies for most drumming patterns in the Low-Country drumming repertoire and it occurs because Low-Country drummers feel the pulse in terms of *akṣara*. This is what most distinguishes the concept of rhythm in Low-Country drumming from Western drumming, where the pulse is generally regarded as regular. Feeling the pulse in term of *akṣara* is a primary characteristic of Low-Country drumming which contributes towards its expressive nature. Because of this, ‘pulse’ in this thesis can be considered as synonymous with ‘*akṣara*’.

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<sup>131</sup> Obeyesekere, 140.

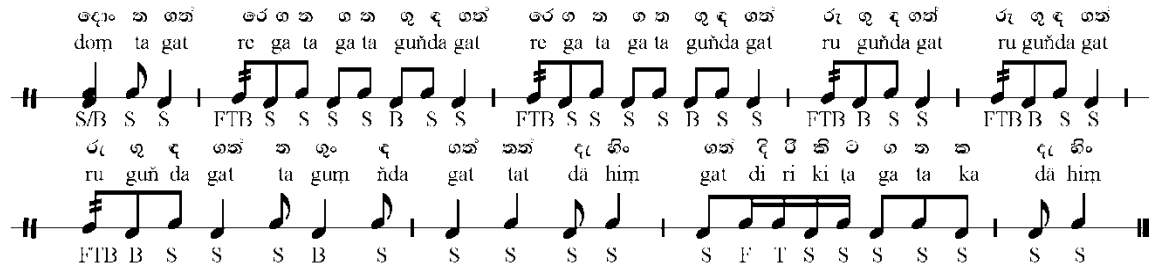


Figure 60: *Ārambhaka pada-A*

The verses that follow describe the Devol princes' journey to Sri Lanka and are accompanied by *sarala pada-D* (Appendix 6, track 4). This short repetitive pattern consists of a regular beat and appears often in most of the segments of the ritual. *Sarala pada-D* reveals a balance between *akṣara* that produce high and low sounds. For example, the *akṣara* marked with the letter (A) in the first half of the pattern (transcribed below) produce deep low sounds. In contrast, *akṣara* marked with the letter (B) in the second half, produce sounds with higher pitches. In addition, the low, resonating, sound produced by the *akṣara guṇ*, at the first beat, provides a strong start to the pattern's cycle. All these features are common to most repetitive patterns in the Low-Country drumming repertoire. The rhythmic nuances of *sarala pada-D* can only be transcribed approximately (for example, the timing of the *akṣara* sequence 'ṇdam gat ga ta'). This is because the drummers feel the pulse in terms of *akṣara*, as opposed to a strictly regular sense.

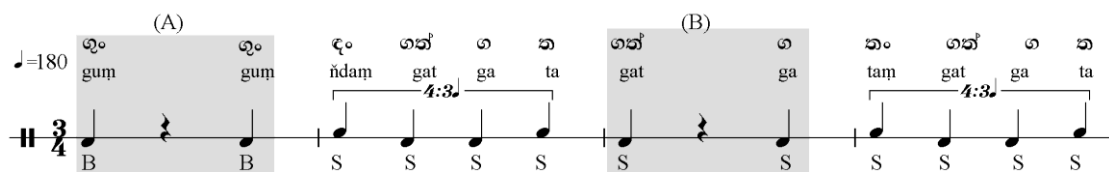


Figure 61: *Sarala pada-D*



The dancer leads a procession towards the *milla* tree. The procession consists of the other performers and the *koṭṭoruvā*, who walks under a canopy held up by four people. Once at the tree, the dancer places some areca flowers, a vessel of turmeric water (*kaha diyara kotala*), and an incense holder (*aṅguru kabala*), at the bottom of the tree. These objects are used throughout the ritual and are symbolic of cleansing the ritual space. Recitation of verses continues in the same style (PR-A), though in a different metre, and the drumming pattern changes to *sarala pada*-B1 (Appendix 6, track 5). Most *sarala pada* consists of a number of variations and the pattern transcribed below presents one such variation (*sarala pada*-B2).

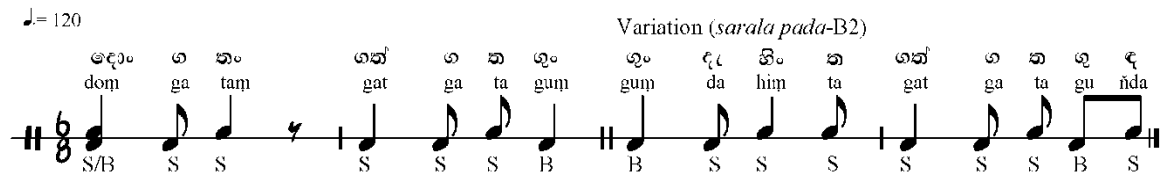


Figure 62: *Sarala pada*- B1 and *Sarala pada*- B2

The *ārambhaka pada*-A is performed again to mark the end of the recitations, and is followed by short versions of the dance patterns *yahan dākma*, *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*. The *yahan dākma* seeks blessings and permission for the dancer performing the segment. The *kotal padē* is a pattern in which the dancer purifies the ritual area by spraying turmeric water from *kahadiyara kotala*. The *dummala padē* is performed while the dancer incenses the ritual area using the *aṅguru kabala*. These three patterns are explored in detail in sections 4.4 and 4.5 of this chapter.

The *milla* tree is then cut as more verses that invoke the Kurumbara demons<sup>132</sup> are recited (PR-A). The drumming pattern, which accompanies these verses, is recognized as the *yāḍini mātraya* (invocation beat) and for analytical purposes, it is labelled *sarala pada*-E1. This pattern is followed by the *keti yāḍini mātraya* (short invocation beat, labeled *sarala pada*-E2) which is a variation of the previous pattern played twice as fast. The end of this section of recitations is marked with *ārambhaka pada*-G3. The drums momentarily stop as the dancer throws handfuls of resin powder into the air over the torch, igniting flames of fire as offerings for the Kurumbara demons. This rite known as *pidēni dīma* also appears right throughout the ritual and will be explored in section 4.6. The performers, including the *koṭṭoruvā*, carrying the tree cuttings, walk back to the ritual space with the drummer playing *sarala pada*-B2. Once in the ritual space, the *koṭṭoruvā* places the cuttings in an altar as the dancer recites more verses in the same style as before (PR-A) to *sarala pada*-B3 and *sarala pada*-B4,<sup>133</sup> which are more variations of *sarala pada*-B1 shown above. The segment concludes with the pattern which started the segment (*ārambhaka pada*-A), followed by a blessing from the dancer, wishing people prosperity; “*āyubōvēvā!*” meaning, “may you live long!” This is accompanied on the drums by the *āvaḍana padē* (blessing pattern). Blessings in this manner are made at the end of most segments of the ritual.

### 4.3 Bringing in the oil to commence the ceremony (*tel vāḍavavīma*)

This ritual segment lasts roughly an hour and is considered to be the official opening of the *devol maḍuva* ritual. It is characterized by the rite of the *koṭṭoruvā* auspiciously

<sup>132</sup> These demons are viewed as the servants of god Devol. Obeyesekere, 68.

<sup>133</sup> This is a characteristic *sarala pada* of the Low-Country and is explored under the *yahan dākma* in section 5.4.

bringing in the container of oil into the ritual space, in order to light the oil lamps that are placed in the ritual altars. A senior dancer begins the segment with an introductory pattern (*ārambhaka pada-C*) which is performed with the *danda* (stick) of Vāhala, in front the deity's altar. The pattern that follows is identified as a *vāṇḍum ata*, which means 'worshipping hand', and it is performed as a salutation to supernatural beings; the deity Vāhala in this instance. The intention of saluting Vāhala is to clear the ritual space of any demons, as Vāhala is considered the controller of demons. The pattern performed is labeled *vāṇḍum ata-A* (Appendix 6, track 6) for the purpose of this analysis. The dancer, when performing these types of patterns, makes a gesture of worship, first using each hand, followed by both hands, as an outward display of salutation. The structure of these *vāṇḍum ata* patterns reflects this sequence of hand worship. As shown in *vāṇḍum ata-A* below, phrases 1-3 decrease in length and each phrase is repeated twice to accommodate the worship by each hand of the dancer. In phrase 4, the dancer uses both his hands in the worshiping gesture. The technical *akṣara* sequence '*gat di ri ki ṭa*' in phrase 4, is generally played in a rushed manner and this makes the beat illusive.



The *koṭṭoruvā* enters the ritual space under a white canopy held by four people similar to the previous segment. He wears a mouth mask and a white turban on his head on which he holds the container of oil. The costumes symbolize the purity and the auspiciousness of the occasion and this is also enhanced by the blowing of the conch, as mentioned in the instruments' chapter.<sup>135</sup> The *koṭṭoruvā* encircles the ritual space and this movement is accompanied on the drums with a type of pattern known as *vaṭṭam pada*, meaning 'patterns to go around.' These patterns are repetitive but often consist of a string of short *akṣara* sequences, which make the beat illusive, and also the start and the end points of the pattern unidentifiable. This feature makes *vaṭṭam pada* distinctive from *sarala pada* that accompany vocal recitations. The pattern played during this instance, labelled *vaṭṭam pada-A* (Appendix 6, track 7), is transcribed and felt in four beats.

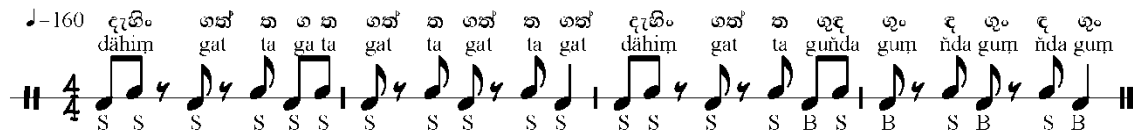


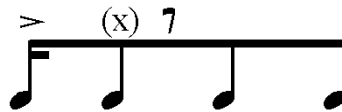
Figure 65: *Vaṭṭam pada-A*

After circling for a number of times, the *koṭṭoruvā* stands still and this cues the start of vocal recitations for the Gods of Four Warrants (PR-A). This is opened with an introductory pattern (labeled *ārambhaka pada-E*) specific to this segment, performed by a senior dancer. The above three events i.e., the encircling of the *koṭṭoruvā*, *ārambhaka pada-E* and vocal recitations are repeated three times. Repetitive drumming patterns that accompany the recitations move through a range of metres (*sarala pada-A*, B, G and C) throughout the three sections. During these sections of recitations, certain drum embellishments (known as *alankāra*) of the *sarala pada* energize the performance. These

<sup>135</sup> Confirmed by Obeyesekere, 74.

embellishments are usually fixed, and therefore will be labelled as ‘set-embellishments’ for the purpose of analysis. The dancers, who usually sing while moving on the spot during the *sarala pada*, dance more steps during these set-embellishments.

An example of *sarala pada*-A and its set-embellishment is transcribed below in figure 67 (Appendix 6, track 8). *Sarala pada*-A consists of an ‘embedded pattern’ in seven beats (figure 66). The pattern is termed ‘embedded’ because this is a layer of rhythm that is felt within *sarala pada*-A. However, it is also not always stated in *sarala pada*-A and thus should be considered to be underneath the surface beats of the pattern. To clarify, it is only the beats (labelled B and D) of *sarala pada*-A that state this embedded pattern. Even though, the other two beats (labelled A and C) do not explicitly state this, these beats also fit over it, i.e., it is only the beat marked with an (x) on the embedded pattern that is left out of these two beats (A and C). This embedded pattern also appears in other drumming patterns played at a slow tempo (also discussed with *kavi tāla* in section 4.10).



**Figure 66: Embedded pattern in seven beats**

Artists of the tradition are often unaware of the above embedded pattern as it is engrained in their practice. This was revealed to me when Prasantha Rupathilake counted the pattern above as ‘one two three four.’ He also emphasized ‘one’ when counting this pattern. The emphasis on ‘one’ reveals that artists have a good sense of the duration of this entire embedded pattern. This allows them embellish freely using different grouping

of notes which do not fit into the embedded pattern. The groupings of notes of six and eight in the set-embellishment of *sarala pada*-A (shaded in grey) are examples of these instances.

The figure displays four musical examples labeled (A), (B), (C), and (D). Each example shows a sequence of notes on a staff, with Odia syllables written above and drum strokes (B, S, M, FTB) written below. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 50. Shaded grey areas highlight specific note groupings: a group of six notes in (A) and (B), and a group of eight notes in (C) and (D). The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, time signatures, and note values.

Figure 67: *Sarala pada*-A

The roll at the beginning of the above set-embellishment cues the dancer to begin, thus on repetition the roll is often replaced with a rhythm similar to the rest of the embellishment. As the exact duration of the roll changes each time, it can only be notated approximately. Drummers strive to finish the roll on a slap stroke which lands closest to the beat. This is a feature of Low-Country drumming which makes the beat illusive, and in turn contributes towards the free and expressive nature of the drumming.

The vocal recitations conclude with *ārambhaka pada*-A. The head priest respectfully takes the container of oil from the *koṭṭoruvā* and, as in the *milla kāpīma* segment, blesses the audience with the *āvaḍana padē*. With the container against his forehead, the dancer performs the *ārambhaka pada*-C in front of all altars in the ritual space. The pattern is also initially played in brief in front of all the altars. Following this, it is performed in full

in front of the main flower-couch. Once at the altar, the dancer signals to the drummers that he is ready to perform the pattern, by stepping the *akṣara guṇ dāhiṇ*.

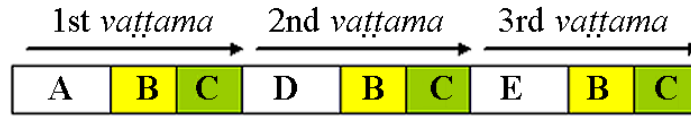
The performers take a brief break while the head priest and the ritual organizers light the oil lamps in the altars. Two more offerings are considered part of this segment: offering of betel leaves (*dalumura pūjāva*) and offering of flowers (*mal pūjāva*) to the Gods. Two trays of betel and flowers being offered are symbolically purified by spraying turmeric water from *kahadiyara kotala* and incensed using the *aṅguru kabala* (the two ritual objects mentioned in the previous segment), with the *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*. The offerings are then placed on the altars during a section of vocal recitations (PR-A) accompanied by the drumming of *sarala pada*-G and B1.

#### **4.4 Dancers seek blessings and permission to perform in the ritual (*yahan dākma*)**

The segment of *yahan dākma* is around half an hour in length and it marks the entry of all the dancers performing in the *devol maḍuva* into the ritual arena. Dancers perform this pattern with the intention of ensuring permission to perform and receive blessings from the Gods, who are believed to be resting in their dedicated altars during the ritual. Artists of the tradition recognize that the *yahan dākma* consists of three movements (*vaṭṭama*) which are dedicated to the Three Refuges. Short versions of this pattern are performed in other segments of the ritual. However, in this *yahan dākma* segment the pattern is performed in its entirety. For the purpose of analysis, each *vaṭṭama* is labeled as



consisting of three sections, one distinct section and two others that are common to all three movements (figure 68). When artists refer to a *vaṭṭama* of the *yahan dākma*, they generally refer to one of these distinct sections.



**Figure 68: Basic structure of *yahan dākma***

The tempo of the pattern gradually increases throughout the three movements. The artists of the tradition describe section A of the first *vaṭṭama* as being in the *bara* (slow, heavy) tempo. The drumming and dancing of the *bara* tempo is considered to be most expressive (mentioned in section 3.7). The dancer at this tempo is given the authority to dictate the timing to a certain extent. This results in an irregularity of the beat, in addition to the irregularity of the pulse, which results from feeling the pulse in terms of *akṣara*. The irregular beat is considered as enhancing the expressiveness of the performance. Collectively, these features mean that patterns in *bara* can only be transcribed approximately. In order to provide a forward momentum to the pattern, drummers accompany the dancer by using *kannilam* or filler-strokes (introduced in section 3.5, advanced hand techniques), played lightly to the edge of the drum. *Kannilam* also help to roughly mark out an underlying tempo, even if the beat and the pulse are irregular, and fill the silences between the main *akṣara* of the pattern. When performed by a group of drummers, *kannilam* can sound cluttered due to the heterophonic nature of the playing, i.e., the *kannilam* strokes played by different drummers often land on different points. However, I suggest that these *kannilam* sounds contribute towards the expressiveness of Low-Country drumming. The first *vaṭṭama* (section A) of the *yahan dākma* transcribed

below (Appendix 6, tracks 9-10), marks out the points where *kannilam* are played. Generally, at these points drummers play two or three consecutive *kannilam* strokes. The position marked with ‘A’ is where the dancer performs the most expressive body movements. The drumming here varies according to the performer, however the phrases are similar to the line ‘*guñ da ga di ta ga ta*’. The roll at the beginning of the pattern is lengthened according to the dancer’s preference.

**Figure 69: *Yahan dākma* - first *vaṭṭama***

Section B of the *yahan dākma* is in five beats and it consists of drumming embellishments. The playing of this particular style of embellishments will be discussed in the context of the *bisō kapa* segment (section 4.9). Section C is a *vāṇḍum ata* (worship pattern; explained in *tel vādavavīma*), labelled *vāṇḍum ata*-B, which is specific to the *yahan dākma* pattern. This *vāṇḍum ata* also conforms to the structure in figure 64, which identified the feature of foreshortening. The third *vaṭṭama* (section E) consists of a repetitive pattern, *sarala pada*-B3. This includes a variation identified as the *gaman tālaya*, which literary means, walking metre, labelled *sarala pada*-B4 (Appendix 6, track 11). The dance of this pattern is an energetic, simple, yet jagged, walking metre which can be considered a trademark of the Low-Country tradition. The pattern is predominantly felt in a compound duple metre and can only be transcribed roughly due to

an extremely subtle, uneven rhythmic pulse. This unevenness is created on the one hand by the drummers, as they feel the pulse in terms of *akṣara*, which are often not strictly regular. For example, *gat ta* and *ga taṁ*, in the second half of the pattern, usually represent different rhythms. However, in this pattern, the duration of these *akṣara* sequences are similar. On the other hand, the momentum of the dancer can be described as polyrhythmic, consisting of a ‘two over three’ rhythm between the hands and feet. This also complements the subtle unevenness of the pulse, which is definitive of Low-Country drumming.

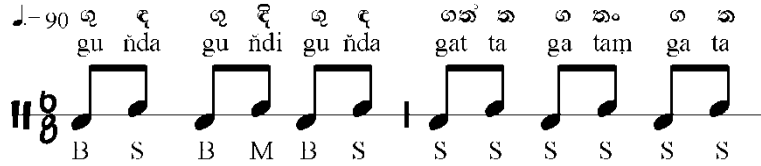


Figure 70: *Sarala pada-B4 (gaman tālaya)*

In addition to the above mentioned basic sections, experienced artists, when performing the *yahan dākma* individually, perform a short sequence of patterns as a prelude. These patterns identified as *mōsam pada*, are repetitive and played slowly at first, then accelerated on each repetition. This kind of acceleration is a common feature of the drumming which contributes towards its expressiveness in timing. As it also appears in *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam* in the *sāṇḍā samayama* segment (in section 4.8) it will be examined in this latter context.

## 4.5 Cleansing and incensing the ritual arena

As mentioned in *milla kāpīma*, artists in the Low-Country tradition associate two patterns with this segment, *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*, which are named after the two ritual

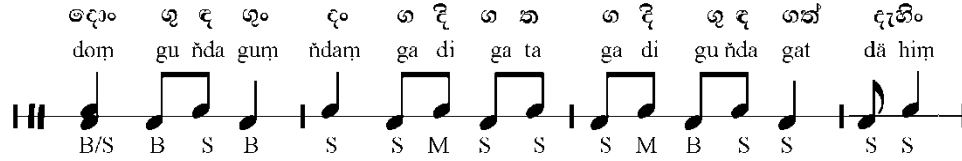
objects *kaha diyara kotala* (vessel of turmeric water) and the *aṅguru kabala* (incense holder) respectively. A dancer performing one of these patterns holds the associated ritual object during the performance, and aside from this distinction, the two patterns are musically identical. In this segment, the two patterns are performed at length, simultaneously by two dancers. One holds the *kaha diyara kotala* and the other, the *aṅguru kabala*. These two patterns are performed in shortened form at the beginning of most segments in the ritual as already mentioned in the *milla kāpīma* and *tel vādavavīma*.

The basis of the *kotal padē* and *dummala padē* (Appendix 6, track 12) is a short repetitive pattern felt in the compound duple metre. At times during the performance, the tempo is increased from the marked figure and this has an effect of enlivening the performance.



Figure 71: Basic pattern of *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*

The rest of the pattern is made up of a number of sections and unlike the *yahan dākma*, the arrangement of these sections varies slightly across different performances. The sections are cued by the dancer, which prompts the drummers to play a phrase that is recognized as an ending or *hamāre* of the above pattern (Appendix 6, track 13). Similar endings are associated with most *sarala pada* of the Low-Country vocabulary. In this instance, the *hamāre* is slowed right down and this deceleration indicates the arrival of a new section.



**Figure 72: Ending (*hamāre*) of *kotal padē* basic pattern**

The ending cues the performance of a longer pattern in the *bara* tempo, which is introduced with an additional *ārambhaka pada-B*. This is followed by the basic pattern of *kotal padē*.

Another longer pattern is of the type known as *surala*<sup>136</sup> which consists of technical rhythms and dance steps. Performing a *surala* is generally considered an opportunity for an individual drummer to show his skills. Thus, during such a performance, a drummer is invited to play the pattern individually, which is then repeated for the dancers. However, in the *kotal padē* segment, the *surala* (plural, *sural*) is performed by the two dancers and the drummers together as a way of keeping the continuity of the performance. Three movements (*vaṭṭama*) of *sural* are associated with the *kotal padē* (Appendix 6, track 14). The composition of the three movements (analysed below), reveals the use of extension and repetition of phrases as a technique of developing the patterns. This feature is apparent in most sets of *sural* in the Low-Country drumming vocabulary.

A *surala* is generally performed with regular timing. However, the technical phrases such as the *akṣara* group *gu hi di ga di ri ki ṭa*, in the third phrase of the patterns below, are played in a rushed manner. This in turn creates a sense of illusive, rhythmic beat, which again contributes to the expressive nature of the drumming.

<sup>136</sup> *Surala* in this context is different to the drum roll which is identified by the same name.

♩ = 160

**Phrase 1**

දොං න ග නං ග හි දි ග නං  
dom ta ga tam ga hi di ga tam

**Phrase 2**

ගත් න දිත් න ග හි ගු ද ග න  
gat ta dit ta ga ti gu ñda ga ta

**Phrase 3**

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න තත් දිත් තත් දි ග නං ග හි න ග හි ගු ද ගත් දොං  
gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta tat dit tat di ga tam ga ti ta ga ti gu ñda gat dom

S/B S S S S S F T S S S S M S S M S S M S S S S S/B

Figure 73: *Kotal padē* first *surala*

♩ = 160

**Phrase 1**

දොං න ග නං ග හි දි ග නං  
dom ta ga tam ga hi di ga tam

**Phrase 2**

ගත් න දිත් න ග හි ගු ද ග න  
gat ta dit ta ga ti gu ñda ga ta

**Phrase 3**

රෙ ග න දිත් න ග හි ගු ද ග න ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න  
re ga ta dit ta ga ti gu ñda ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න තත් දිත් තත් දි ග නං ග හි න ග හි ගු ද ගත් දොං  
gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta tat dit tat di ga tam ga ti ta ga ti gu ñda gat dom

FT S S M S S M B S S S B F T S F T S S S S S M S M S S M S S M B S S S/B

Figure 74: *Kotal padē* second *surala*

Phrase 1

♩ = 160

dom la ga tam ga hi di ga tam (x3)

Phrase 2

gat ta dit ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta

re ga ta dit ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta de ga ta dit ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta

Phrase 3

gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta

tat dit tat di ga tam ga ti ta ga ti gu ṇḍa gat dom

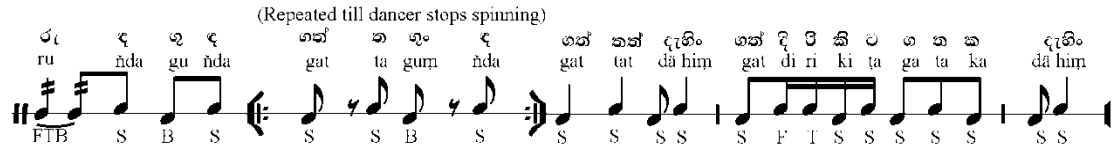
Figure 75: *Kotal padē* third *surala*

The end of the *kotal padē* segment is marked similar to the *tel vāḍavavīma* segment with the *ārambhaka pada*-C followed by blessings to the audience with the *āvaḍana padē*.

#### 4.6 The offering of fire to the demons (*pidēni dīma*)

The offering of fire to the demons as mentioned in *milla kāpīma*, is demonstrated by the performer with a lit-torch igniting flames by throwing handfuls of resin powder in the air. This segment consists of the same rite though it is elaborately performed as compared to the *milla kāpīma*. The dancer performs this segment for around half an hour, and enters the ritual space and spins across the length of the arena as he performs *ārambhaka pada*-D (Appendix 6, track 15). This introductory drumming pattern is specifically associated with spinning and is also seen in the *Vāhala* segment. The roll is lengthened in

accordance with the drummer's preference and the repeating section is played until the dancer stops spinning. Similar to other introductory patterns the ending of the phrase is played quickly.



**Figure 76: Ārambhaka pada-D**

The basic pattern for the segment is short and repetitive in four beats. It is simple compared to the pattern which is the basis of the *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*. During this segment, an acceleration of tempo is also used, similar to the previous segment, in order to shape the performance. This segment consists of the dancer performing a number of decorative patterns with the torches (*pañdam pada*), in front of the ritual altars, intermittent to the basic pattern. Two of these patterns are also played as introductory patterns (*ārambhaka pada*-A, F), therefore will not be labelled as separate patterns. A third pattern performed specifically with the torches, is labelled *pañdam pada*-A. However, this too consists of similar characteristics to introductory patterns. As seen with the *tel vāḍavavīma*, these patterns in front of the altars are cued by the dancer with the steps *gum dāhim*. The segment is concluded with *ārambhaka pada*-D with an additional dancer who arrives in the ritual space to take part in the next segment.

#### **4.7 Planting the Torch of Time (*kālapañdama*)**

The *kālapañdama* is one of the more significant segments of the ritual which lasts close to an hour. Artists identify one main pattern named *kālapañdama padē*, as being specific



to this segment. The *kālapañdama padē* is a longer pattern danced by most of the dancers in smaller groups with vocal recitations in the style of PR-D. This recitation style is not explicitly taught in the tradition as the performer stretches the text to fit in with points of emphasis in the pattern. The pattern consists of a short prelude (*antādiya*) performed only as an introduction, prior to the initial performance of the *kālapañdama padē*.

The structure of the *kālapañdama padē* (Appendix 6, track 16) is worth exploring in detail, as the pattern is an example in which some of the drumming features in the Low-Country, mentioned up until this point, exist mutually with each other. The sections of the pattern, marked on the transcription as A, A1, A2, B, C and D are analyzed as follows:

1. Sections A, A1, A2 – These three are essentially the same section, however they contain slight differences in order to develop the performance. Section A can be considered the basic framework on which the other two sections are developed. Section A2 embellishes the phrase in Section A, marked with a dotted line on the transcription. Section A1 differs from A2 at the start of the phrase. The start of section A1 (*dāhiṃ guṇḍa guṇḍa*) marked with a (y) on the transcription also doubles as the end of Section D, contributing towards the continuity of the pattern. The starting phrase of section A1 is a condensed version of the start of Section A2 (*riṃ dāhiṃ ruṇḍa guṇḍa*).

2. Section B – This section is a type of pattern that is considered to be in the *bara* tempo. As mentioned previously (in section 4.4 in the *yahan dākma*), these patterns allow the dancer to be expressive. Phrases marked (x) demonstrate common phrases that drummers play to accompany these expressions. These are not considered as part of the pattern (hence notated with a cross on the note head) since they are only played in response to the dancers movements.
3. Section C – This section is a common phrase played when the drummers spin in a circle and it serves a similar purpose to *ārambhaka pada-D* played to accompany the spinning across the arena in the *pidēni dīma* segment.
4. Section D – This section, as well as serving as a bridge which connects the performance back to section A1, also acts as a transition to continue with recitations of verses after the performance of the *kālapañdama padē*. Immediately after the final group of dancers perform this pattern drummers play the set-embellishment of *sarala pada-A* (figure 67) introduced in the *tel vāḍavavīma* segment. The timing of the rhythmic phrases of this section is similar to the groupings of sub-divisions in six, found in the set-embellishment of *sarala pada-A*.

(A) .....

රිං දැහිං රු ද ගු ද ගත් තං ගත් ගු දං ග තං ගු දං දො ගු ද ගත් දැහිං ගු  
 rim dāhim ruṇḍa guṇḍa gat taṃ gat guṇḍaṃ gataṃ guṇḍa dom guṇḍa gat dāhim guṇḍa

1

FTB S S FTB S B S S S S B S S S B S/B B S S S S B

(A1) ගත් තං ග දි න ගු දි න ග දි න ගු දං දො ගු ද දැහිං ග ත ගු  
 gat taṃ ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta ga di ta guṇḍa dom guṇḍa dāhim ga ta guṇḍa

2.3.4 ...

S S S M S B M S S M S B S/B B S S S S S S B

(B) (x) (x)

රිං ති ත ග ත ග දි න ග ත ගත් තං ති ත ගු ද ගු දි න ගු ද ගත් දැහිං ගත් දැහිං  
 rim ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta gat taṃ ti ta guṇḍa guṇḍita guṇḍa gat dāhim gat dāhim

FTB M S S S S M S S S S S M S B S B M S B S S S S S S S S S S S

ගු දැහිං ගු දැහිං දො ත ගු ගු ද් ග ත ගු දි න ක රෙ ග ත කු දො  
 guṇḍa dāhim guṇḍa dāhim dom ta gu gu ṇḍa ga ta gu ṇḍi ta ka re ga ta ku dom

B S S B S S S/B S B B S S S B M S S FTB S S S/B

(A2) රිං දැහිං රු ද ගු ද ගත් තං ග දි න ගු දි න ග දි න ගු දං දො ගු ද දැහිං ග ත ගු  
 rim dāhim ruṇḍa guṇḍa gat taṃ ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta ga di ta guṇḍa dom guṇḍa dāhim gata guṇḍa

FTB S S FTB S B S S S S M S B M S S M S B S/B B S S S S S S B

(C) රිං ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ත ක දි ගු ද් ක දැහිං  
 rim ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ta ka di gu ṇḍa ka dāhim

FTB S S S M S S S M S S S M S S S M S S S M B S S S S S

(D) (y)

ගු දං ග ත ගු ද දැහිං ග දි ග ත ගු දං ග ත ගු ද දැහිං ගු ද ගු ද  
 guṇḍaṃ ga ta guṇḍa dāhim ga di gata guṇḍaṃ ga ta gu ṇḍa dāhim gu ṇḍa guṇḍa

B S S S B S S S S M S S B S S S B S S S B S B S

Figure 77: The *kālapaṇḍama padē*

Following the *kālapaṇḍama padē*, the recitation of verses (PR-A) from the story of the Devol princes adventure, move through a number of metres similar to the *tel vāḍavavīma* segment. As mentioned above the drum embellishment of *sarala pada-A* leads into *sarala pada-A* which is followed with *sarala pada-E*, C and B as well as their own

embellishments. The recitations end with a long ending (known as an *irraṭṭiya*) which features the structure of foreshortening explored in figure 64 of section 4.3. This pattern is only performed partially in contemporary *devol maḍuva* rituals. In response to this Prasantha Rupathilake stated that “abandoning segments of patterns in this way demonstrates how performers do not understand some of the basic structures of patterns in the Low-Country tradition. The appreciation of the structures is what has made the patterns survive in musician’s memories for generations. The breaking down of these structures would mean that the patterns have less chance of surviving for the next generation of musicians.”<sup>137</sup>

The performances of the *kālapañḍama* segment ends with the usual blessings with the *āvaḍana padē*. To conclude the segment, a senior *kapu mahattaya* oversees the erecting of the Torch of Time, which is a decorated areca pole, at the centre along the boundary of the Devol altar. As mentioned in the ritual background, decorative coconut-leaf chains are attached to the nearby altars to symbolize the ship of Devol.

#### **4.8 Dance segment for the demons of the Evening Watch (*sāndā samayama*)**

The Evening Watch is dedicated to Kurumbara demons<sup>138</sup> mentioned in the *milla kāpīma* segment. This performance sees offerings of fire made to the Kurumbara demons in a similar way to the *pidēni dīma* segment. However, it is more elaborate and lasts for

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<sup>137</sup> Prasantha Rupathilake, personal interview, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka, 12 Aug 2008. trans. Sumuditha Suraweera.

<sup>138</sup> Obeyesekere, 109.

around one hour, with four dancers performing, dressed in red costumes, resulting as entertainment which is highly popular among audiences.

The first part of the segment consists of no new musical material, as the basis of the drumming is the same as in *pidēni dīma*. In addition to the introductory pattern *ārambhaka pada-D*, already seen performed in *pidēni dīma*, vocal recitations (PR-A) which invite the demons of the Evening Watch, accompany *sarala pada-D*, B and C. All of these patterns were introduced in previous segments, except *sarala pada-C*. Transcribed below, *sarala pada-C* (Appendix 6, track 17) is a common pattern felt in four beats.

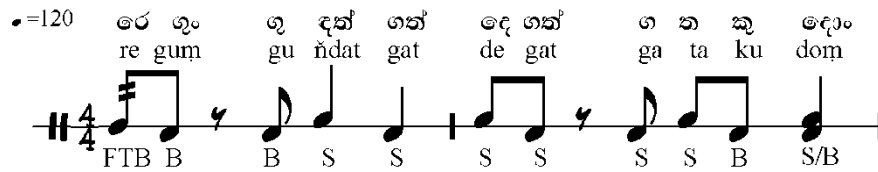


Figure 78: *Sarala pada-C*

The remainder of the segment consists of a number of patterns that are specific to the *sāṇḍā samayama* segment identified as *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam* (Appendix 6, track 18). When performed, these patterns are repeated, starting at a slow tempo and accelerating throughout the repetitions.<sup>139</sup> The number of repetitions is determined by the lead dancer's cue, where he steps the *akṣara gum dāhiṃ* as seen in previous segments. Three patterns make up the vocabulary of *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam*. Each pattern is directly developed from the previous one. The three patterns are of increasing length. The composition of the three patterns also features the use of extension and repetition, similar

<sup>139</sup> A similar type of pattern known as *mōsam pada*, were identified as being a prelude to the *yahan dākma* in section 4.4.

to the three *sural* patterns of the *kotal padē* (explored in section 4.5). The third pattern transcribed below is in five beats. This pattern is used to demonstrate the use of acceleration in Low-Country drumming. This is another important feature that enhances the expressiveness of drumming in terms of timing. The two types of lines are marked for purpose of analysis and this will be explained further down.

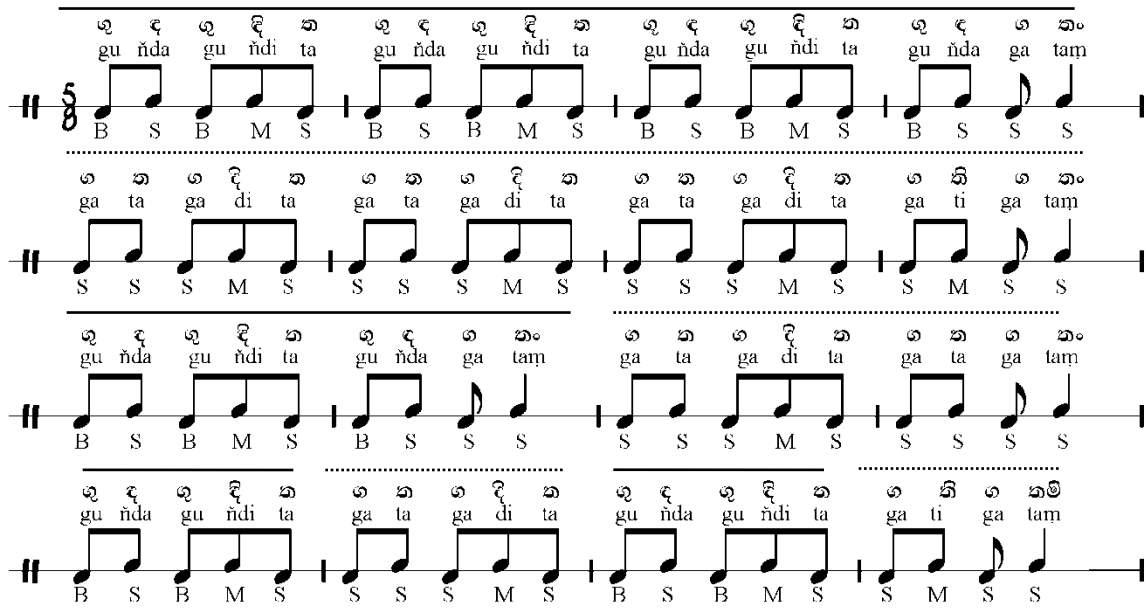


Figure 79: *Pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam-3*

During the initial repetitions, in which the pattern is performed slowly, drummers embellish the pattern. Following, is the first line of the pattern played with these embellishments.



Figure 80: First line of *pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam-3* performed slowly

In contrast, during the latter repetitions, condensed and shorter *akṣara* sequences are used to accommodate the faster tempo. As the first line of the pattern demonstrates below, the modification is such that, the pattern changes to one which is in two beats.

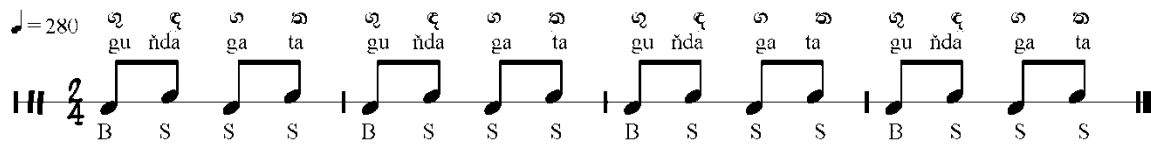


Figure 81: First line of *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam-3* performed fast

In addition to the *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam* patterns, current performances of the *sāṇḍā samayama* segment include a number of other patterns which accompany decorative moves of the dancers (labeled *paṇḍam pada-B* and *C*). The structure of the *paṇḍam pada* features a strict foreshortening of two phrases similar to the third *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam* pattern (illustrated with two types of lines in figure 79). I argue that the simple formation of these patterns ensures that the performance is relatively unchallenging for the general audience, hence more suited to the entertaining nature of the segment.

This study also reveals that current performers of *devol maḍuva* rituals do not perform two longer patterns known as *paṇḍam pada iratti* (included in Appendix 1-C under *sāṇḍā samayama*), which are associated with this segment. Jayantha considers these patterns to be of high artistic value, due to their advanced structure and the opportunity they provide for the drumming to be fully expressive. However, these patterns are much more challenging for the audience. This explains why these patterns are not performed, as their inclusion would be detrimental to the popular nature of this segment. In a ritual that is changing its focus towards entertainment, I foresee patterns with simpler structures being

performed more often at the expense of the patterns which are considered to be of high artistic value. Jayantha expressed his deep concerns regarding this situation, while viewing recorded footage of a *devol maḍuva* included in this study: “The best contemporary performers do not perform these patterns of high artistic value. This means that these patterns will not survive in the vocabularies of the younger artists.”<sup>140</sup>

The entertaining performance of the segment concludes with blessings (*āvaḍana padē*) as one of the dancers takes a pot containing the offering for the Kurumbara demons from an altar and invites one of the organizers of the ritual to make the offering. The organizer is invited to sit on a mat laid on the floor and to hold the offering on his head, while verses are recited (PR-A) to *sarala pada*-D, E1 and E2. The dancer utters a plaint (UPR-A) and asks the organizer to say ‘*kāpai*’ or ‘it is done,’ indicating that all the misfortune and evil will leave the attendants of the ritual as a result of the offerings. The dancer places the offering at the dedicated altar and performs a short worship pattern *vāṇḍum ata*-C to conclude the segment.

#### **4.9 Planting of the Queen’s Bough (*bisō kapa*)**

The *bisō kapa* is the ritual object featured in this segment and it symbolizes the bough planted by the Queen of Tamil King Sēraman at the inaugural *devol maḍuva* ritual. “It is a trunk of a banana tree, about four feet high, the outer bark nicely peeled so that the *kapa* shows a shiny cream color. The head of the *kapa* is decorated with tender coconut (*gok*) leaves forming a bulge on top in the shape of a full pot symbolizing fertility. Coconut and

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<sup>140</sup> Sandhoris Jayantha, 9 May 2007.



areca flowers are stuck on the *kapa*. ”<sup>141</sup> This segment is relatively short and about half an hour in duration.

At the start of the segment the *bisō kapa* is brought out and kept on a chair covered in a white cloth. The introductory pattern *ārambhaka pada-A*, performed by two dancers opens the performance. Brief versions of *kotal padē* and *dummala padē* are followed in a similar way to the offering of betel leaves and flowers in the *tel vāḍavavīma* segment. *Ārambhaka pada-C* concludes this brief segment of cleansing the ritual object.

As seen in the *kālapañḍama* segment, the *bisō kapa* too consists of a long pattern (labelled *bisō kapa-A*), and a prelude which is specific to this segment. Even though this *bisō kapa* pattern is distinguishable, it does not show any drumming features unexplored until this point. Prior to the performance of the *bisō kapa* pattern, which is repeated individually by a number of dancers, a short recitation of text, as thanks to the Three Refuges identified as *stotra*<sup>142</sup> (praise) and *sanna* (exposition),<sup>143</sup> is seen in the style of PR-E. Even though recitation in this style does not occur often in the *devol maḍuva* ritual, it is extensively featured in the opening of the *bali* ritual. After the *bisō kapa* pattern, a section of recitation of verses (PR-A) to the drumming of *sarala pada-D* concludes with a short ending pattern (*ārambhaka pada-F*). This is followed by another *stotra* and *sanna* (PR-F).

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<sup>141</sup> Obeyesekere, 107.

<sup>142</sup> Also identified by artists as *slōka*.

<sup>143</sup> Obeyesekere, 115. “*Stotra* (thanks) are highly formalized verse or prose texts generally recited as thanks giving to the Three Jewels or the higher gods. In some *stotras* every word is in formal, stylized Pāli or Sanskrit ... The *sanna* is an elucidation of the *stotra* in less formal, but nevertheless ‘good’ Sinhala.”

The section which follows consists of dancing and recitations (PR-A) that praise the *bisō kapa*, to the following drumming pattern, in seven beats. Artists recognize this pattern as a *kavi tāla* (these patterns are explored in section 4.10). I label the pattern as *kavi tāla-E* for purpose of analysis. The drumming of *kavi tāla-E* includes a type of embellishment similar to that of section D of the *yahan dākma*. This particular type of embellishment is more spontaneous compared to the set-embellishments of *sarala pada*, therefore, will be termed ‘free-embellishment’. However, I still prefer the term embellishment over improvisation, when referring to these patterns, as the drummer is expected to strictly follow the rhythm and/or *akṣara* at particular points of the pattern. The highlighted sections of the pattern mark these points of *kavi tāla-E* (Appendix 6, track 19).

♩ = 80

(free-embellishment example)

Figure 82: *Kavi tāla-E*

The recitation and dance to *kavi tāla-E* is varied with recitations of a similar style (PR-A) with *sarala pada-C*. The transition between the two patterns is filled with a short

bridging phrase in four beats. This demonstrates how performers freely change back and forth between patterns of different beats. Performers are able to do this because patterns are generally learnt by their *akṣara* sequences rather than with reference to the number of beats.

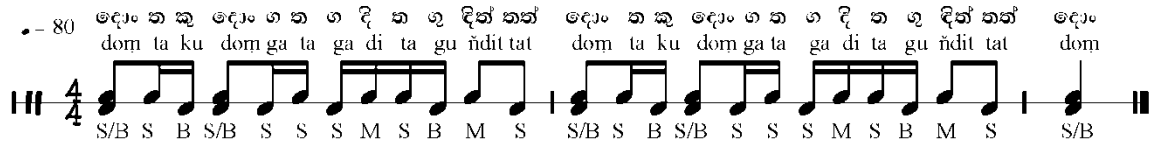


Figure 83: Short bridging phrase for *kavi tāla-E*

In order to conclude the segment, a recitation of verses of “festival joy”<sup>144</sup> in (PR-A) in seven beats, to *sarala pada- G*, is performed with one of the dancers holding the *bisō kapa*. At the end of the recitations the dancer holding the *bisō kapa* performs the final segment on his own, sequentially, with patterns *sarala pada-B*, *ārambhaka pada-A*, *vāñdum ata-B* and *vāñdum ata-D*. The final pattern in the segment is labeled as *vāñdum ata-E* (Appendix 6, track 20). The final phrase of this *vāñdum ata* is an example of how phrases of drumming in performance, are played in a manner which disguises the beat. This enhances the expressiveness of drumming and also contributes towards the mysticism of the ritual.

<sup>144</sup>Obeyesekere, 108.

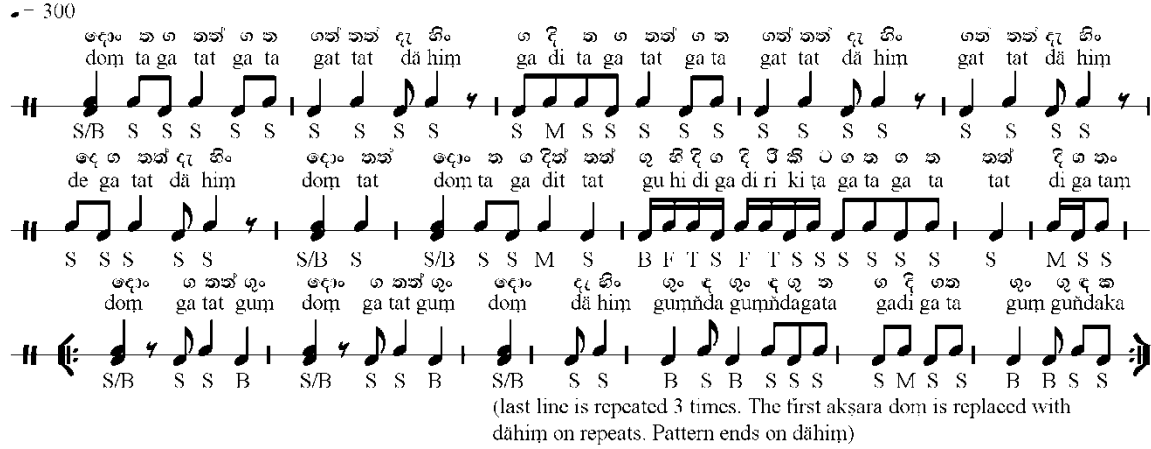


Figure 84: Vāṇḍum ata-E

The segment concludes as the *bisō kapa* is planted in front to the right of the Pattini *torana* and the audience is blessed with the *āvaḍana padē*.

#### 4.10 Ritual of the ceremonial archway (*toran yāgaya*)

This segment, about an hour in length, honours the ceremonial archway which is dedicated to goddess Pattini. By the end of the segment, the white curtain, which covers the altar built in to the archway, is removed and this declares the altar's official opening in the ritual. The segment is begun as others, with an introductory pattern (*ārambhaka pada-F*) and, similar to the previous segment, sees a section of recitation of *stotra* and *sanna* (PR-F). This is the beginning of the segment's main performances.

The *toran yāgaya* is considered especially significant for the performers, as in this segment they are given an opportunity to perform a particular type of dance pattern known as *kavi tāla*. These patterns, being relatively long, are performed slowly and are considered to be of high artistic significance. They are accompanied with vocal

recitations in the style of PR-D similar to the *kālapañdama padē*, discussed in section 4.7. Similar to other patterns played in *bara*, the dancer dictates the timing of *kavi tāla* and the patterns allow specific points in which the dancers are free to show their expressive movements. However, drummers do not play as many filler strokes in these patterns as compared to those played in *bara*. The patterns are usually opened with a short introductory pattern (*ārambhaka pada-B*) and performed individually or in smaller groups. The performances highlight a unique aspect of the relationship between the drummer and dancer. During these performances the dancer does not inform the drummers of the pattern he is about to perform in advance. The drummers are supposed to work out what the pattern the dancer is performing within the first two or three *akṣara* of the pattern. Thus the majority of the skill of a drummer in this segment lies in being able recognize these patterns, which in turn requires the memorization of a reasonable number of such patterns. The segment also gives the drummers an opportunity to highlight their skills, since often the performance of a *kavi tāla* is followed with a *sural* that is associated with the pattern. These *sural* patterns are performed in the conventional format as explained under the *kotal padē* (section 4.5), whereby a drummer is invited to perform the *sural* individually and it is repeated for the dancers. A general segment of *toran yāgaya* sees the performance of around five to six different *kavi tāla* and at most three *sural* performances. Below, two patterns of *kavi tāla* are used as an opportunity to explore the connection between the dancer's footsteps and the *akṣara* of patterns, which are common to both the dancer and the drummer.

Similar to the relationship between *akṣara* and techniques in drumming discussed in Chapter 3, dancers perform particular *akṣara* of patterns with different footsteps depending on their placement within a pattern. An in-depth study of the relationship between the dancers footsteps and the *akṣara* of a pattern constitutes a paper on its own. Thus, in the following analysis I explore the direct correlations between the footsteps of the dance and the drumming, using frames captured from a live performance of two *kavi tāla* patterns. The analysis aims to recognize a number of *akṣara* and sequences of *akṣara* which dancers consistently use in the same way. I suggest that these *akṣara* act as ‘signposts’ within a pattern, and assist the drummer to play the pattern by memory. In the performances of *kavi tāla*, these *akṣara* also help the drummer recognize the pattern being performed by the dancer.

The first *kavi tāla* examined is labelled *kavi tāla-A* (Appendix 6, track 21). It features the hidden, embedded pattern in seven, mentioned in section 4.3. In this pattern, it is only the phrase ‘*di ta ga ta*’ that explicitly states this embedded pattern.

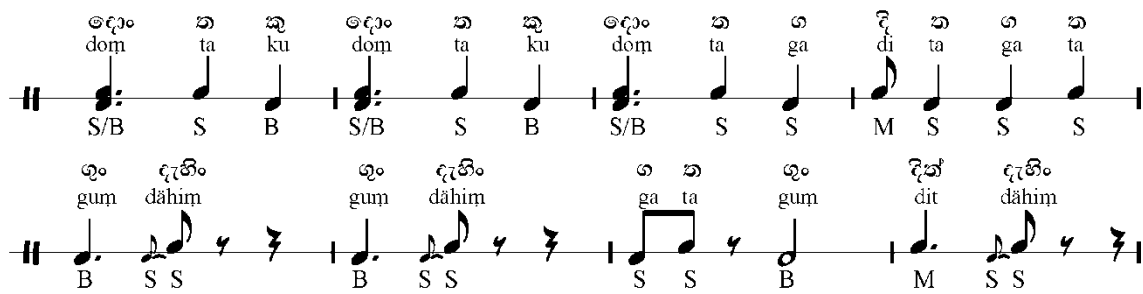


Figure 85: *Kavi tāla-A*

The captured frames in figures 86-91, present the dancer’s footsteps while dancing the *akṣara* of *kavi tāla-A*. The *akṣara* of the pattern are labelled below each figure from left to right. A brief description of the dancer’s movements also follows each figure.



**Figure 86: (*dom, ta, ku, dom, ta*)**

- dom* - dancer jumps backwards landing on both feet on *dom*
- ta* - right foot is taken forward and lands on *ta*
- ku* - left foot is taken forward and lands on *ku*
- dom* - jumps backwards, landing on both feet on *dom*
- ta* - right foot is taken forward and lands on *ta*



**Figure 87: (*ku, dom, ta, ga*)**

- ku* - left foot is taken forward and lands on *ku*
- dom* - dancer jumps backwards landing on both feet on *dom*
- ta* - right foot stretches to the right and lands on *ta*
- ga* - the left is brought back and *ga* is played on the drum as the dancers foot is moving back



**Figure 88: (*di, ta, ga, ta*)**

- di* - left foot lands on *di*
- ta* - right foot moved back and lands on *ta*
- ga* - left foot taken back and lands on *ga* to stand with parallel feet
- ta* - right foot lands on *ta* while the dancer remains in the same position



**Figure 89: (*gum, dāhiṃ, gum, dāhiṃ*)**

- gum* - right foot taken up and lands on *gum* and immediately springs up
- dāhiṃ* - right foot taken back and lands on *dāhiṃ*
- gum* - left foot taken up and lands on *gum* and immediately springs up
- dāhiṃ* - left foot taken back and lands on *dāhiṃ*





**Figure 90: (*ga, ta, gum, dit*)**

- ga* - dancer walks forward, right foot lands on *ga*
- ta* - *ta* is played during the walking motion
- gum* - left foot lands on *gum* and is lifted up
- dit* - dancer turns to the right and lands on the right foot on *dit*



**Figure 91: (*dä, him*)**

- dä* - the dancer jumps and the right foot lands on *dä* while the left is still in the air
- him* - left foot lands on *him* next to the right, to conclude the pattern

A similar analysis of another *kavi tāla* pattern, labelled *kavi tāla*-B (Appendix 6, track 22) is presented below.

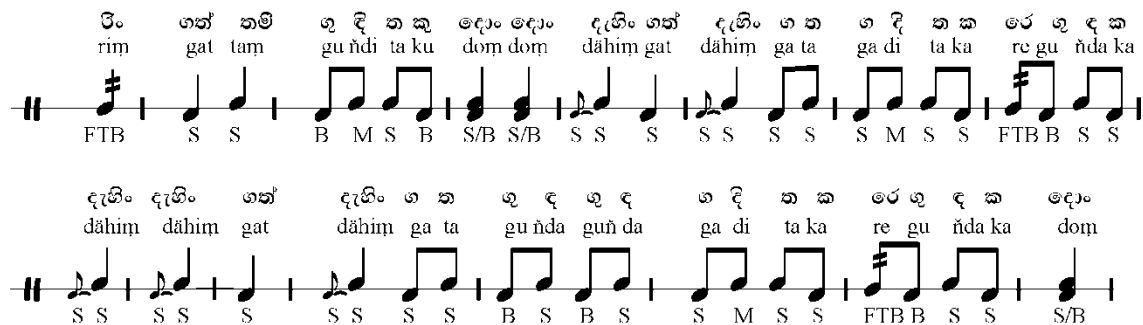


Figure 92: Kavi tāla-B



Figure 93: (*rum*, *ñdam*, *gat*, *tam*, *gu*)

- rum* - dancer shuffles backwards along the ground
- ñdam* - right foot lands to the side on *ñdam* to come to a still position with parallel feet
- gat* - right foot is taken forward and lands on *gat*
- tam* - left foot is taken forward to be parallel to the right foot and lands on *tam*
- gu* - right foot is taken to the side and lands on *gu*



Figure 94: (*ñdi*, *ta*, *ku*, *dom*, *dom*)

- ñdi* - left foot is taken across and forward and lands on *di*
- ta* - right foot is taken forward and lands on *ta*
- ku* - left foot is taken forward to be parallel with the right and lands on *ku*
- dom* - jumps, landing on both feet on *dom*
- dom* - jumps, landing on both feet on *dom*



Figure 95: (*dä, hiṃ, gat, dä, hiṃ*)

- dä* - jumps, landing only the left foot on *dä*
- hiṃ* - the right foot, still in the air, lands on *hiṃ*
- gat* - left foot stretched to the left and lands on *gat*
- dä* - jumps, landing only the right foot on *dä*
- hiṃ* - the left foot, still in the air, lands on *hiṃ*



Figure 96: (*ga, ta, ga, di, ta*)

- ga* - right foot stretched to the right and lands on *ga*
- ta* - left foot taken close to the right foot, landing on *tha* and bounces off the floor
- ga* - left foot lands forward on *ga*
- di* - right foot is taken back to a position closely behind the left and lands on *di*
- ta* - left foot is lifted up and lands on the same position for *ta*





Figure 97: (*ka, re, gu, ṇda, ka*)

- ka* - right foot stretched to the right to be parallel to the left and lands on *ka*  
*re* - right foot is rotated about 45 degrees while still keeping contact with the floor, using the toes as a pivotal point  
*gu* - right foot is taken back, lands on *gu*, and is immediately bounced for the next *akṣara*  
*ṇda* - right foot is moved forward and lands on *ṇda*  
*ka* - left foot moved forward to be parallel to the right and lands on *ka*



Figure 98: (*dä, hiṃ, dä, hiṃ, gat*)

- dä* - jumps, landing only the left foot on *dä*  
*hiṃ* - the right foot, still in the air, lands on *hiṃ*  
*dä* - jumps, landing only the right foot on *dä*  
*hiṃ* - the left foot, still in the air, lands on *hiṃ*  
*gat* - right foot stretched to the right and lands on *gat*



Figure 99: (*dä, hiṃ, ga, ta, gu*)

- dä* - jumps, landing only the left foot on *dä*  
*hiṃ* - the right foot, still in the air, lands on *hiṃ*  
*ga* - left foot stretched to the left and lands on *ga*  
*ta* - right foot is moved close to the left to be side by side and lands on *ta*  
*gu* - right foot is stretched to the right and lands on *gu*



Figure 100: (*ñda, gu, ñda, ga, di*)

- ñda* - left foot is moved close to the right and lands on *ñda*  
*gu* - left foot is stretched to the left and lands on *gu*  
*ñda* - right foot is moved close to the left and lands on *ñda*  
*ga* - right foot is moved forward as the performer keeps moving and lands on *ga*  
*di* - left foot lands on *di* forward from the right while still moving forward



Figure 101: (*ta, ka, ru, ñdam*)

- ta* - right foot lands on *ta* forward of the left while still moving  
*ka* - left foot lands on *ka* to stop the forward movement  
*ru* - dancers shuffle backwards along the ground  
*ñdam* - right foot lands to the side on *ñdam* to come to a still position with parallel feet.



Figure 102: (*gu, ñda, ka, dom*)

- gu* - left foot is taken back and lands perpendicular to the right on *gu*
- ñda* - right foot is moved forward and lands on *ñda*
- ka* - left foot is moved forward, placed parallel to the right and lands on *ka*
- dom* - jumps, landing on both feet on *dom*

The analysis of the frames reveals that *akṣara dom* and *riṃ* (or other versions of the roll) are danced consistently with the same footsteps each time. *Dāhiṃ* is generally performed consistently, with a rare exception of when it is treated as one *akṣara* (figure 89). As confirmed by the artists, *guṃ* is also generally consistently stepped and bounced off immediately (figure 89). In addition, the *akṣara* sequence *re gu ñda ka* (figure 97) is danced the same way each time. As mentioned prior to the analysis, the consistency of how the above *akṣara* are stepped, assists the drummer in recognizing the *kavi tāla* pattern being performed and act as ‘signposts’ to successfully play the pattern by memory.

Similar to some of the patterns of the *sāndā samayama* segment, the performance of *kavi tāla*, regardless of their high artistic value, is not extremely popular among the audience. This is recognized by the artist and as a result, a number of performances with simple patterns *sarala pada-C, B, B4* with recitations (PR-C), as well as exhibitive

performances of acrobatics and spinning, often prelude each performance of *kavi tāla*. Unlike the patterns which are omitted from the *sāndā samayama* segment, *kavi tāla* remains to be a significant element of the vocabulary of Low-Country drumming and dance.

The section of *kavi tāla* is followed by recitations of verses (PR-A) in *sarala pada*-B, F, identified as *toran kavi* which mention the decorations, measurements and the preparations of the ceremonial archway. The Pattini altar is respectfully unveiled and the segment of the *toran yāgaya* concludes with the same patterns being performed as the ending of *bisō kapa*. In this instance these patterns are performed with the dancer wearing the unveiled curtain around his neck.

#### **4.11 Segment dedicated to the Pattini deity**

During the ritual preparations, the casket of divine ornaments of the goddess Pattini is placed in the main flower couch. It may also be placed in a Pattini shrine near the ritual space, in case the ritual is carried out in the vicinity of such a shrine. In both instances the casket is brought into the centre of the ritual space in procession, with recitations (PR-A) that invite the goddess (with *sarala pada*-F) at the start of this segment, similar to the *milla kāpīma* and *tel vādavīma*. The dancer performs this segment dressed as Pattini. The performance is carried out on a path laid out with white material from the Pattini altar to the centre of the ritual space, where the casket is temporarily placed. The setting up of the segment as well as the longer duration of around one and a half hours reflects the higher status and importance of the goddess in this ritual.

The importance given to the goddess is further revealed in the extensive performances of the *yahan dākma*, *kotal padē* and *dummala padē* compared to the brief versions of these patterns performed at the start of other segments. The slow procession from the centre of the ritual space to the Pattini altar begins with an introductory pattern (*ārambhaka pada*-A) as the Pattini dancer respectfully places the casket on his head. Vocal recitations (PR-A) during this procession describe various manifestations of Pattini<sup>145</sup> in *sarala pada*-D, B and C.

The Pattini segment consists of a number of patterns specific to the segment. The extent to which these patterns are performed depends on the skill of the dancer, as some of the dance patterns are among the most technical in the ritual. During the above procession to the Pattini altar, the experienced dancer performs a type of pattern known as *karañdu pada*. *Vañdum ata*-L is performed prior to this as a transition from the recitations. *Karañdu pada* are long technical patterns and consist of three movements. The movements see the use of extensions and repetitions of phrases, similar to the *sural* of *kotal padē*. Once at the Pattini altar, the dancer ceremonially places the casket of ornaments in the altar with *vañdum ata*-E.

Two other sets of dance patterns, specific to the segment identified as Pattini *pada*, and *mātrā pada* are performed next, in honor of the goddess. These patterns are also long and technical and demand considerable skill from the dancers. The patterns are in *bara* and each consists of a *sural*. The *bara* pattern sees the performance of singing *tānam* in the

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<sup>145</sup>Obeyesekere, 119.



style of PR-D similar to *kavi tāla* and the *kālapaṇḍama padē*. The *sural*, when danced by an experience dancer, is generally done on light feet, conveying the feminine and subtle nature of the goddess. Expression of characteristics of a supernatural being in this way is recognized by the term *bhāvaprakāṣana*.<sup>146</sup> Artists recognize seven Pattini *pada* and seven *mātrā pada* to be in the vocabulary of Low-Country drumming. However, even the most experienced dancer performs, at the most, three Pattini *pada* and occasionally one *mātrā pada* in current *devol maḍuva* rituals. Refer to tracks 23-24 in Appendix 6 for a performance of Pattini *pada*-1 and its *surala*.

The figure displays the musical notation for Pattini *pada* 1, consisting of three staves. The notation includes Sinhala lyrics, English transliterations, and drum strokes. The first staff contains the lyrics: ගත් gat, ගුඛ්ඳා ගුඛ්ඳා gat, ගත් දාහිම දාහිම, ති ත ගුඛ්ඳා ගා තා කා, දොම ත කු දොම. The second staff contains: රිං rim, ගත් දාහිම ගත් දාහිම, ගුං දාහිම, ගත් දාහිම ගත් දාහිම දොම, ති ත ගුඛ්ඳා ගා දි ගා තා. The third staff contains: ගුඛ්ඳා gu ṇḍi, ගුඛ්ඳා gu ṇḍa, ගත් gat, රෙ ගා තා කු දොම, රිං rim, ගත් gat, ගුං gu, ගුඛ්ඳා gu ṇḍa, ගත් gat. Drum strokes are indicated by letters: S (single stroke), B (double stroke), M (medium stroke), FTB (fourteenth beat), and S/B (single or double stroke). The notation is written on a five-line staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

(Note: drummer plays filler strokes at marked points)

Figure 103: Pattini *pada* 1

<sup>146</sup> Sandhoris Jayantha

♩= 170

ගත් දි රි කි ට ග ත ග ත ගත් දි රි කි ට ගුං දි රි කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග ති ත ග ත කු දො  
gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගුං දි රි කි ට ග ත ග ත ගත් දි රි කි ට ගුං දි රි කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග ති ත ග ත කු දො  
gum di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගත් දි රි කි ට ග ත ග ත ගත් දි රි කි ට ගුං දි රි කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග ති ත ග ත කු දො  
gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගුං දි රි කි ට ග ත ග ත ගත් දි රි කි ට ගුං දි රි කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග ති ත ග ත කු දො  
gum di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ග දි ත කු දො ගු හි දි ත කු දො දො තත් දො ත ග දි තත් ගත් දි රි කි ට ග ත ග ත තත් දි ග ත  
ga di ta ku dom gu hi di ta ku dom dom tat dom ta ga dit tat gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta tat di ga tam

S F T S S S S S S S S F T S S B F T S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B  
B F T S S S S S S S S F T S S B F T S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B  
S F T S S S S S S S S F T S S B F T S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B  
B F T S S S S S S S S F T S S B F T S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B  
S M S B S/B B M S B S/B S/B S S/B S S M S S F T S S S S S S S S M S S

Figure 104: Pattini pada 1 - surala

It is customary for a dancer performing a major segment to dance a type of pattern identified as an *aḍauva* or *saudama* and to receive donations from the audience.<sup>147</sup> A *saudama* is a salutation verse in which the drumming mimics the phonetics of each line of the verse. Thus in its performance, each line of the verse is repeated with the drums. The following table presents the *saudama* performed in this segment, known as the Pattini *saudama* (Appendix 6, track 25). The transliterated lines of the verse appear on the left column and next to each line is the transcription of the drumming which imitates the voice. The *akṣara* of the drumming is not transcribed as the phonetics of the verse are considered to be the basis of the drumming when playing a *saudama*. The notes marked with the technique symbol (x) are produced using advanced techniques.

<sup>147</sup> A *saudama*, as mentioned in Chapter 4, is a type of pattern that is identified in the 216 fundamental patterns of Sinhala drum theory.

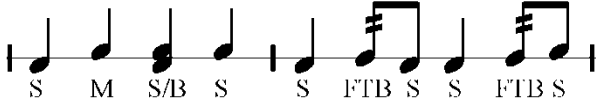
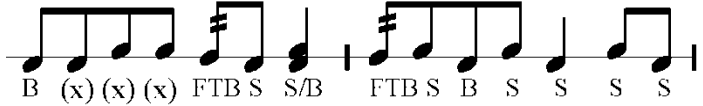

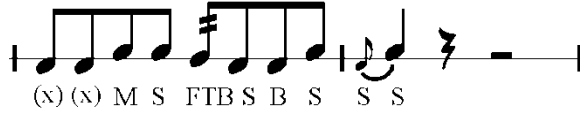
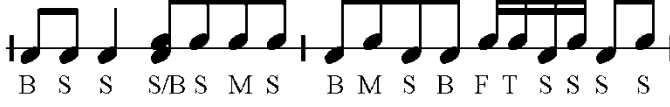

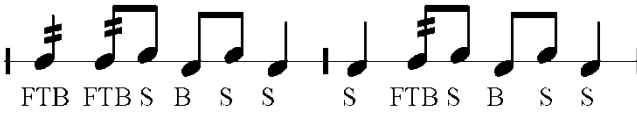
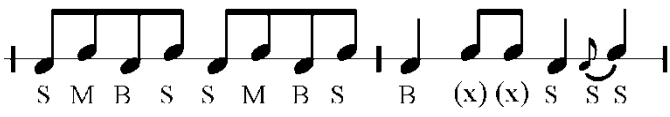
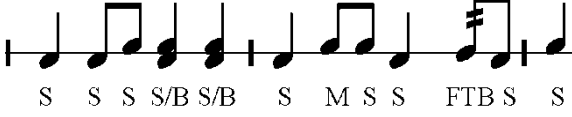

<i>tat dit toṃ naṃ tāla udāraya</i>	
<i>kimanika saudam</i> <i>harda devi pādāya</i>	
<i>chandravatīgē indra nīla</i> <i>gata</i>	
<i>kimanika suraluvanē</i>	
<i>takunam jehekita</i> <i>vinaka vinōdara</i>	
<i>gatta eratnam salaṃba atē</i>	
<i>setsiri denamā Pattini</i> <i>karunā</i>	
<i>aṇḍituṇḍi paṇḍipura</i> <i>jehenuka tat tari</i>	
<i>tāhaka jen jen</i> <i>Pattini sura sauṃdam</i>	
<i>natana pada</i> <i>Pattini sura sauṃdam</i>	

Table 3: Pattini saudama

The final performance of the Pattini segment consists of another set of patterns known as *tēvā pada* (Appendix 6, track 26). In order to perform the *tēvā pada*, the dancer takes the goddess' shawl from the Pattini altar and wears it over his arms. The two anklets of the goddess are also taken from the altar and worn on the dancer's hands over the shawl. The dancer's hands are shaken and the anklets are rattled, in order to express the power of these divine ornaments. *Tēvā pada* are short repetitive patterns, performed with the dancer wearing the divine objects of the deity in the above manner. These patterns include a unique phrase *gatiṁ diṁ diṁ* which is not seen in any other drumming pattern of the ritual.

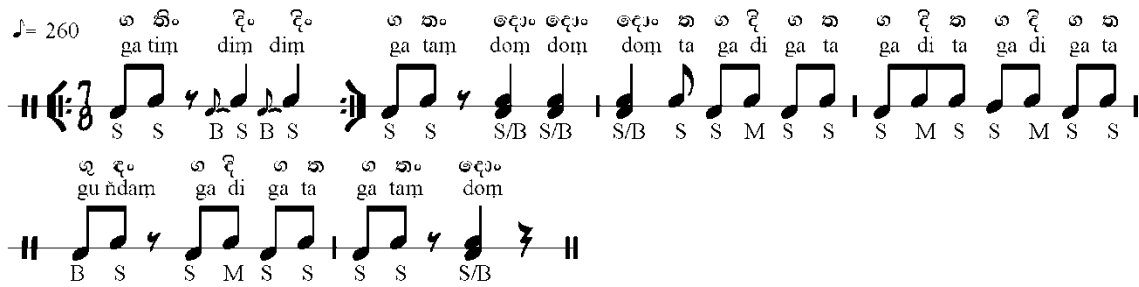


Figure 105: *Tēvā pada*

This exclusive phrase seen in *tēvā pada* also reflects the importance of Pattini in the *devol maḍuva*. The dance performances of the Pattini segment conclude with the usual round of blessings to *āvaḍana padē*.

#### 4.12 Performance of ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*)

In Sinhala culture the *magul bera* pattern is performed at most events that are considered to be auspicious. The performance of the pattern is also accompanied by the blowing of the conch, which further contributes to the auspiciousness of the environment. Older

artists believe that the particular combinations of *akṣara* groups in the *magul bera* contain the power to create such an environment.

The *magul bera* demonstrates the expressive qualities of free and stretched timing in Low-Country drumming to the highest standard. It is one of two Low-Country drumming patterns which does not accompany the performance of dance.<sup>148</sup> Drummers regard the pattern to be the most important in the drumming repertoire. The pattern consists of three movements or *vaṭṭams* which are dedicated to the Three Refuges (Appendix 6, track 27). Each *vaṭṭama* includes drumming phrases that are strung together with *akṣara* sequences free of a regular beat or measure. I analyse the composition of the *magul bera* below in order to identify some of its other features that contribute towards its highly expressive nature of stretched timing. This analysis also recognizes some of the compositional features of drumming patterns introduced up to this point.

The structure of the *magul bera* pattern is divided into 16 different sections within the three *vaṭṭams* for purpose of analysis. The different sections are labelled ‘sub-structures.’ Each sub-structure either demonstrates a particular feature of the drumming or the development of a particular rhythmic motif. A number of other phrases inbetween the sub-structures are labelled as ‘connecting phrases.’

1. This is an introductory phrase at the start of the first *vaṭṭama*. It features the use of acceleration of the *akṣara* sequence *dä hiṃ*. The exact number of repetitions varies during different performances.

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<sup>148</sup> The other pattern is *pūjā bera* presented in section 4.17. Sri Lankans generally only associate the *magul bera* with the *gāta beraya* of the Up-Country as the majority of ceremonial occasions employ Up-Country drummers and dancers. However the *magul bera* pattern exists in all three traditions.

2. Sub-structure - this is developed with the motif at the end of the introductory phrase *guñ daṁ dā hiṁ*. This section also features the use of acceleration.
3. Connecting phrase - most of this phrase, apart from the final two *akṣara* sequences, is played in a rushed manner.
4. Sub-structure - this is built using the feature of foreshortening.
5. Sub-structure - this is the start of second *vaṭṭama* and this features the roll, which is extended according to the drummer's preference.
6. Sub-structure - this is built on a repetitive pattern. It is embellished and accelerated throughout the section.
7. Connecting phrase - a new slower tempo is set in this phrase which develops the phrase *ru daṁ guñ daṁ dā hiṁ*. This is an extension of the phrase used in 2) above.
8. Sub-structure - this section is based on a repetitive pattern and features similar characteristics to the sub-structure in section 6) above.
9. Connecting phrase - this marks the end of second *vaṭṭama*. The tempo is slowed down in this phrase.
10. Sub-structure - this opens the third *vaṭṭama*, and this features the repetition of a short phrase. The drumming is accelerated on each performance.
11. Connecting phrase - this phrase is played at a slower tempo and its ending is repeated in the next sub-structure.
12. Sub-structure - this is built using repetition of fragments of the opening phrase of this sub-structure.
13. Sub-structure - this features the use of foreshortening.
14. Connecting phrase - the ending of this phrase is played gradually slowing down.
15. Introductory phrase to the final section of the pattern. This is identical to the introductory phrase of the *magul bera* pattern.
16. Sub-structure - this develops the phrase *doṁ dāhiṁ* and it concludes the *magul bera* pattern.

දැහිම  
dāhim

1

re ga di ta ga ta gu gu ñdi ta ga ta gu gu ñdam ga ta gu ñdam dā him

2

gu ñdam gu ñdam dāhim gu ñdam gu ñdam ga di ga ta gu ñdam dāhim

gu ñdam gu ñdam ga di ga ta gu ñdam ga di ga ta gu ñdam ga di ga ta

3

gu ñdam ga ta gu gu ñda ga ta ga ti ta gu ñda ga ta dāhim ta dom

4

ru ñda gu ñda gu ñda ga di ga ta gu ñda dā him de ga ta dāhim ta gat

rim ga tam rim ga ta gu ñda gu ñdi ri ki ta gatam rim ga ta gu ñda gat di ri ki ta gatam

gat di ri ki ta gatam gu ñdi ri ki ta gatam ru ñda gu ñda gu ñda ga di ga ta gu ñda dāhim de ga ta

gat gu ñdam dā him gu hi di ga di ri ki ta gu ñda dāhim dom

Figure 106: Magul bera vaṭṭam 1

5

රිං ගත් දැ හිං ගත් දැ හිං දොං න කු දොං රිං ග න ගත් රිං ගුං  
rim gat dā him gat dā him dom ta ku dom rim ga ta gat rim gum

BFT S S S S S S B/S S B B/S BFT S S S BFT B

රෙ ග න ගු දං ග න රෙ ග න ගු දං ග ති ග න ගු රෙ ග න ගු දං  
re ga ta guṇḍam ga ta re ga ta guṇḍam ga ti ga ta gum re ga ta guṇḍam

BFT S S B S S S BFT S S B S S M S S B BFT S S B S

6

දැහිං න ගත් න ගත් න ග නං දෙ ග න ගුං ද ගුං ද ගු දං  
dāhim ta gat ta gat ta ga tam de ga ta gum ṇḍa gum ṇḍa guṇḍam

S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S B S B S B S

දෙ ග න ගත් න ගත් න ග නං දෙ ග න ගුං ද ගුං ද ගු දං දෙ ග න ගත් න ගත් න දැහිං  
de ga ta gat ta gat ta gatam de ga ta gum ṇḍa gum ṇḍa guṇḍam degata gat ta gat ta dāhim

S S

7

රු දං ගු දං දැහිං රු දං ගු දං ග න ගු ද ග න ග ති න ගු ද ග නං  
ru ṇḍam guṇḍam dāhim ru ṇḍam guṇḍam ga ta gu guṇḍa gata ga ti ta guṇḍa gatam

BFT S B S S S BFT S B S S S B B S S S M S B S S S

8

දැහිං ග න ගු ද ගු ද ගු දි න කු දොං කි ටික ක දැහිං ග න ග ති ග න ග ති න ග නං දෙ ග  
dāhim ga ta guṇḍaguṇḍa guṇḍi taku domki ti ta ka dāhim ga ta ga ti ga ta ga ti ta ga tam de ga

S S S S B S B S B M S B B F T S S S S S S S M S S S M S S S S S S

තං ග න ගු ද ගු ද ගු දං දෙ ග තං ග න ග දි ග න ගත් ත ග තං දෙ ග  
tam ga ta gum gu ṇḍa guṇḍagu ṇḍamde ga tam ga ta ga di ga ta gat ta ga tam de ga

S S S B B S B S B S S S S S S S M S S S S S S S S S S

තං ග න ගු ද ගු ද ගු දං දෙ ග තං ග න ග ති ග න ග දි න ක දෙ ගු ද ක දැහිං  
tam ga ta gumguṇḍa guṇḍagu ṇḍamde ga tam ga ta ga ti ga ta ga di ta ka de gu ṇḍaka dāhim

S S S B B S B S B S S S S S S S M S S S M S S S B S S S S

9

දොං න ගත් දැ හිං රිං ග න ගත් දැ හිං  
dom ta gat dā him rim ga ta gat dā him

B/S S S S S S BFT S S S S S S S S S

රිං ග දි න ග දි න ගු දි න ගු දි න ගු දත් ග න ගු දත්  
rim ga di ta ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta gu ṇḍi ta gu ṇḍat ga ta gu ṇḍat

BFT S M S S M S B M S B M S B S S S B S

Figure 107: Magul bera vaṭṭam 2



10 දැහිං න ලං රු රු ද නේ දැහිං න නේ රු රු ද නේ  
(repeat 4X)  
dāhim ta gum ru ru ṇḍa gat dāhim ta gat ru ru ṇḍa gat

11 දැහිං ්ං න න න දි න න න දි න ල ද නේ න ලං ද නේ දි නේ දැහිං  
dāhim riṇ ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta guṇḍa ta guṇḍa gat ta gum ṇḍa gat di ta gat dāhim

12 දො දො න නි ල දො න දැහිං දො දො නි ල දො න දැහිං  
dom dom ta ga ti guṇḍam tam dāhim dom dom ga ti guṇḍam tam dāhim

13 ්ං න නේ න නි න නේ න නි න නේ න න දො න න  
riṇ ta gat tam ga ti ta gat tam ga ti ta gat tam ga tam dom ga ta

14 ්ං න දැහිං ්ං න න න නි න ල ද ලං දො  
riṇ ga tam dā him riṇ ga tam ga ta ga ti ta gu ṇḍa gum ṇḍam

15 දැහිං  
dāhim

16 ්ං න න න න නේ දැහිං දැහිං දැහිං නේ දැහිං දො දො දැහිං  
riṇ ga ta ga ta ga ta gat dāhim dāhim dāhim gat dāhim dom dom dāhim

Figure 108: Magul bera vaṭṭam 3

The performance of the *magul bera* pattern in the *devol maḍuva* has changed dramatically over the last two decades. Recorded footage of a *devol maḍuva* held in 1994 reveals that performances of *magul bera* during this time were made by a group of around ten drummers (Appendix 6, track 28).<sup>149</sup> The performances consisted of the above three *vaṭṭams*, as well as the extensions of the pattern (known as *hatara vaṭṭam* and *hat vaṭṭam*.)<sup>150</sup> These performances provided an opportunity for the drummers to showcase the depth of their vocabulary as individuals, as during the majority of the ritual the drummers play to accompany the dancers. The performance is of a competitive nature, whereby a senior drummer performs a particular extension of the *magul bera*, thereby challenging a younger drummer to play the same extension. This environment ensures that the younger drummers strive to reach the level of the older experienced artists. The performance also includes small dance routines of the extensions performed by the drummers themselves, ensuring that the drummers have a thorough understanding of the dance of Low-Country.

In contrast, today, the *magul bera* is performed by two to three drummers in *devol maḍuva* rituals. The performance is condensed to such an extreme that sections of the basic three *vaṭṭam* are left out (Appendix 6, track 29). While this entails that the drumming pattern considered to be of highest importance in the Low-Country is commodified, the loss of the extensions also fails to provide the inspiration needed for the younger drummers to achieve the highest level drumming. These changes in the

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<sup>149</sup> *Devol maḍuva* ritual, 16 December 1994. DVD. C. de. S. Kulatillake Research and Information Centre, University of Visual and Performing Arts in Colombo.

<sup>150</sup> As mentioned in the ritual background, these extensions are only rarely heard in the *bera pōya hēvisi*.

*magul bera* can be associated with the entertaining nature of the outdoor ritual, where patterns of artistic value are being compromised.

#### **4.13 *Telme*, the dance in honour of the Twelve Gods**

The *telme* segment, around an hour in length, features dancers dressed in colourful costumes and is perhaps the most obvious illustration of a ritual that is changing its focus towards entertainment. A large collection of patterns are associated with the segment and these include short repetitive patterns as well as a number of longer patterns. The short repetitive patterns (grouped and presented under *telme sarala pada*) are performed like the ones in *sāndā samayama* where the acceleration of tempo is used to shape the performance. The longer patterns include specific *vāṇḍum at*, *antādi* or preludes, *vaṭṭam pada* and *sural* and as these do not feature any new characteristics of the drumming outside of the ones already discussed. Some of these longer patterns are presented in Appendix 1-C under *telme*.

Current performances of this segment omit most of the longer patterns whereas the short repetitive patterns are performed extensively, and made elaborate with impressive displays of acrobatics and spinning by the dancers. Some ritual organizers go as far as replacing the longer patterns with guest displays from gymnasts brought in from outside the community of Low-Country artists (Appendix 6, track 30).

These guest displays are an example of the most significant changes in contemporary rituals. The drumming accompaniments for these displays consist of phrases in the shape

of short introductory patterns. However, these patterns are not recognized as part of the drumming vocabulary. This is both due to the criticism the displays acquire from older artists and the performance's relatively recent inclusion. The criticism is in response to the fact that these segments replace drumming patterns that are considered to be of high integrity. The displays also see the acrobatic performer replacing the Low-country dancer who shares the same vocabulary as the drummer. The inclusion of Western performance elements in the ritual is inevitable as the *devol maḍuva* ritual evolves with today's society. Thus, it is interesting how the expressive features of Low-Country drumming are adapted by the drummers to enhance the gymnastic experience for the audience.

#### **4.14 Segment dedicated to the deity Vāhala**

The dancer of the Vāhala segment shows a high level of physical endurance and displays an element of trance, which is intended to convey the bravery and strength of the deity. Contemporary Low-Country artists do not associate the appearance of trance with the possession of a supernatural being. They simply recognize trance as a feature that enhances the intensity of the performance. As Prasanthā explains, “the dancer only appears to be in a trance, in order to make the performance dramatic and heighten the intensity of the performance.”<sup>151</sup> This view is reflective of the emphasis on self control in Buddhist ideology. “Sinhala Buddhists have traditionally considered possession to be an undesirable state, for one possessed has no self-control but acts at the will of another being.”<sup>152</sup> The dancer performing the Vāhala segment remains in complete control during the entire hour long segment. The excitement of this performance makes Vāhala the most popular segment of the ritual.

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<sup>151</sup> Prasanthā Rupathilake, 6 September 2008.

<sup>152</sup> Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 28.

The drumming of the segment contributes towards heightening the intensity of the performance. Artists recognize the drumming of this segment as in the *kaḍinam* (fast) tempo. The drumming patterns during this segment are short and repetitive. The tempo of the drumming starts around 200 beats per minute and gradually increases to around 240 towards the end of the segment where the dancer appears to be in a state of trance. The continuous repetitive drumming demands considerable physical strength from the drummers, thus it is usual to see drummers taking turns in pairs or small groups, while others rest for brief periods. The acceleration and deceleration of the tempo is a main feature of this segment and drummers use this effectively to shape the performance.

The performance starts with vocal recitations (PR-A) dedicated to the deity with *sarala pada*-B and this is ended with the performance of *vāṇḍum at*-A in front of the altar of Vāhala. Similar to other segments, the dancer opens with the *yahan dākma*, *kotal padē* and *dummala padē*. In order to establish the mood of the segment, only the third *vaṭṭama* of the *yahan dākma* and the repetitive sections of the other two patterns are performed. For the remainder of the segment, the dancer performs short repetitive patterns, similar to the basic pattern of *pidēni dīma*, using a number of ritual objects: *hak geḍiya* (conch), *kalaha* (clay pot), *mugura* (spear), *pol mala* (coconut flowers), *paṇḍam* (torches) and *dummala* (resin). The performance with each of these objects consists of short decorative patterns performed at the front of each ritual altar. Similar to *pidēni dīma* and *sāṇḍā samayama* segments, these are cued by the dancer. The fast tempo of the patterns and the intensity of the performance in this segment means that the cue is simplified to a *dom akṣara* instead of the usual *guṇ dāhiṃ*. Between each section performed with a ritual

object, the dancer spins across the middle of the ritual space with *ārambhaka pada*-D and briefly rests beside the Torch of Time. Even while the dancer rests, the drumming continues in a lighter manner in order to maintain the continuity of the performance (Appendix 6, track 31).



**Figure 109: *Ārambhaka pada*-D in Vāhala segment**

The patterns with ritual objects conclude when the dancer collapses, on a mat laid out in front of the Pattini altar, from exhaustion. The conclusion of the Vāhala segment is marked where the dancer gets up and performs the Daḍimunḍa<sup>153</sup> *saudama* and receives donations from the audience. Performance of this pattern features the imitation of the voice (PR-A) with drumming similar to the Pattini *saudama*. The dancer blesses the audience and performs *vāṇḍum at-A* in front of the altar dedicated to the deity.

#### 4.15 The dance of Devol and fire trampling

The most significant drumming of the Devol segment includes the performance of Devol *pada* in honour of the deity. Other performances in the segment include a ritual drama, a ritual of fire trampling and an offering to the Kurumbara demons. The ritual drama and the fire trampling do not consist of any significant drumming as these focus on enacting the mythical story of Devol princes' arrival on the island. The offering to the demons is identical to the rite described in *sāṇḍā samayama*.

<sup>153</sup> Dadimunda also refers to Vāhala.

Artists often claim that there are seven Devol *pada*. However, I suggest that this claim is merely an attempt to remain convergent with numerology. Discussions with the artists reveal an acceptance that Devol *pada* are better considered as one entire performance, as the patterns are not singled out in performance, unlike some of the other segments in the ritual such as *toran yāgaya* or Pattini. The Devol *pada* are often performed in full, unlike significant patterns in other segments. The time, at which the segment is performed, around 9 am, usually has a fresh audience coming to see the end of the ritual. The Devol *pada* are also immediately followed with a ritual drama and the fire trampling which are of high interest to audiences. These factors contribute towards the entirety of the Devol *pada* performance. However, a closer examination of the pattern would reveal its musical elements that have allowed it to survive in the contemporary ritual.

The construction of the Devol *pada* demonstrates a fine balance of simplicity, variation, repetition, development and opportunity for displays of acrobatics. The majority of the pattern is in a compound duple metre. The first movement, known as the *kāṅgul padē* is of a simple structure with a phrase being foreshortened (Appendix 6, track 32).

90

ଚ ଗ ତା ଦାହିମ ଗ ତା ଗା ତା ଦାହିମ ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଦାହିମ ଗା ତା ଗା ତା ଦୋମ  
 re ga ta dāhim ga ta ga ta dāhim gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa dāhim ga ta ga ta dom

ଚ ଗ ତା ଦାହିମ ଗା ତା ଗା ତା ଦୋମ ଚ ଗ ତା ଦୋମ ଚ ଗ ତା ଦୋମ  
 re ga ta dāhim ga ta ga ta dom re ga ta dom re ga ta dom

ଗୁମ୍ ଦି ଟି କି ତା ଗା ତାମ ଗା ତାମ ଦିତ୍ତା ଗା ତା ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗା ହି ଦି ଗା ତାମ  
 gum di ri ki ta ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa ga hi di ga tam

FTB S S S S S S S S S S B S B S S S S S S S S/B  
 FTB S S S S S S S S/B FTB S S S/B FTB S S S/B  
 B F T S S S S S S S M S S S B S B S S S F T S S

Figure 110: *Kāṅgul padā* (Devol *pada* movement 1)

The second movement (Appendix 6, track 33) is in the same metre and is made up of a theme phrase labelled (A) which is referred to regularly whilst playing phrases which are variations of the theme phrase. The final phrase labelled (End) concludes this movement.

90

ଗତ୍ତ ଦିମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗା ତି ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗା ତା ଗତ୍ତ ଦି ଟି କି ତା ଗା ତା କୁ ଦୋମ  
 gat dim ga ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ku dom

(A) S S S S S S S M B S S S S S F T S S S S B S/B

(Variation) ଗାତ୍ତାମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗା ଦି ତା ଗାତ୍ତାମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗୁମ୍ ନ୍ଦି ତା  
 gal tam ga ta ga di ta gal tam ga ta gum ṇḍi ta

S S S S S M S S S S S S B M S

(A) ଗତ୍ତ ଦିମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗା ତି ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗା ତା ଗତ୍ତ ଦି ଟି କି ତା ଗା ତା କୁ ଦୋମ  
 gat dim ga ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ku dom

S S S S S S S M B S S S S S F T S S S S B S/B

(Variation) ଗାତ୍ତାମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗୁମ୍ ଗୁମ୍ ନ୍ଦାମ୍ ଗା ତା ଗୁମ୍  
 gal tam ga ta gum gum ṇḍam ga ta gum

S S S S B B S S S B

(End) ଗୁମ୍ ଦି ଟି କି ତା ଗା ତାମ ଗା ତାମ ଦିତ୍ତା ଗା ତା ଗୁ ନ୍ଦା ଗା ତା ଗା ହି ଦି ଗା ତାମ  
 gum di ri ki ta ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu ṇḍa ga ta ga hi di ga tam

B F T S S S S S S S M S S S B S S S S S F T S S

Figure 111: Devol *pada* movement 2



The third movement (Appendix 6, track 34) is mostly in the same metre and consists of a similar structure to the second. However, variations of the theme are further developed by doubling the tempo and playing the theme at a *bara* tempo. The ending in this movement is longer and more elaborate compared to the previous but the ending's final phrase is the same as the ending of the second movement.

$\text{♩} = 90$

(A)

ගත් න දො දොං රෙ ග න දො දොං රෙ ග න ගු රු ගු රු ග න දො දොං  
 gat ta do dom re ga ta do dom re ga ta gu ru gu ru nda ga ta do dom

S S S/B S/B FTB S S S/B S/B FTB S S B S B S S S S/B S/B

(Variation)

ගත් න ගු රු ගු ගත් න ගු රු ගු ගත් න ගත් ග නං න ගු රු රෙ ග න ගු රු රු ග න දො දොං  
 gat ta guhdam gat ta guhdam gat ta gat ga tam ta guhdam re ga ta guhda gu nda ga ta do dom

(bara)

ගත් දු හිං දොං දොං රෙ ගත් දු හිං දොං දොං රෙ ග  
 gat da him dom dom re gat da him dom dom re ga

S S S S/B S/B FTB S S S S/B S/B FTB S

දු හිං ගුං දු හිං ගුං දු හිං ගුං දු හිං ගත් දු හිං දොං දොං  
 da him gum da him gum da him gat da him dom dom

S S B S S B S S S S S/B S/B

(End)

ගත් ති න ග න දොං දොං රෙ ග ති න ග න දොං දොං  
 gat ti ta ga ta dom dom re ga ti ta ga ta dom dom

S M S S S S/B S/B FTB S M S S S S/B S/B

රු රු ග න ග න ගු රු ග න ග න ගත් දි රි කි ෆ ග න න දොං දොං  
 ru ru nda ga ta ga ta gu ru nda ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki fa ga ta ka dom dom

FTB S S S S S B S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S/B S/B

ග හි දි ග නං ග හි දි ග නං ග හි දි ග නං ග හි දි ග නං ග හි දි ග නං  
 gahidigatam gahidigatam gahidigatam gahidigatam gahidigatam gahidigatam

S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S M S B B S B M S B B S B M S B

ගුං දි රි කි ෆ ග නං ග නං දිත් න ග න ගු රු ග න ග හි දි ග නං  
 gum di ri ki fa ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu nda ga ta ga hi di ga tam

B F T S S S S S S S M S S S B S S S S F T S S

Figure 112: Devol pada movement 3

The fourth movement is similar to the second movement. But this movement also includes the variation of the theme in the *bara* tempo similar to the third movement. The

fifth movement (Appendix 6, track 35) is significantly shorter. Its phrase labelled (B) is also heard in the ending of the third movement. The movement is a prelude to the displaying section, where dancers spin around in a circle and also the drummers are invited to play a number of *sural*.

The image displays musical notation for the Devol *pada* movement 5. It consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of 90 and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are in Sinhala, with Romanized versions below: 'ga ti ta ga tam', 'ga ti ta do dom', and '(B) ga ti ta gu gi nda', 'gu ndi ta gu gu nda', 'gu ndi ta gum'. The drumming patterns are indicated by letters: S, M, S, S, S, S, M, S, S/B, S/B, S, M, S, B, B, S, B, M, S, B, B, S, B, M, S, B. The second staff is labeled '(Ending)' and contains the lyrics: 're ga ta dit ta ga ta gu nda ga ta', 'gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta', 'tat dit tat di ga tam re gu nda ta'. The drumming patterns for the ending are: F, T, B, S, S, M, S, S, S, B, S, S, S, B, F, T, S, F, T, S, S, S, S, S, S, M, S, M, S, S, F, T, B, B, S, S.

Figure 113: Devol *pada* movement 5

The Devol *pada* are simple but consist of a variety of different performance aspects which make the patterns interesting. Thus, I suggest this segment risks relatively little change, in the contemporary world, compared to some of the other segments already explored in the ritual.

The Devol *pada* are concluded with the dancers performing a *vāṇḍum ata* (*vāṇḍum ata*-F) specific to this segment with the *mugura* (spear) of the God Devol. The following phrase, played at the end of *vāṇḍum ata*, sees the dancers circle their upper body, using their waist as a hinge which symbolizes the masculine power of the god (Appendix 6, track 36). A similar phrase appears again in the Garā segment. As mentioned in the Pattini segment, this is an instance of how the drumming contributes towards the expression of the dancer, conveying the characteristics of the deity.



#### **4.17 Thanksgiving and sending the deities back to their abodes (*deviyaṇṭa pin dīma*)**

In this final brief segment, the performers gather in front of the main Pattini altar and recite verses (PR-A) to *sarala pada*-B, in order to pay tribute and give thanks to various gods, teachers and parents. The verses request the gods to leave and return to their abodes, and ask forgiveness for any mistakes or offences the performers may have unknowingly made in the process of performing in the ritual. This conclusion of the *devol maḍuva* ritual is associated with the second solo drum pattern of the Low-Country drumming tradition known as the *pūjā bera*. The pattern is of a similar nature to the *magul bera*, however much shorter in length. Like the *magul bera*, the *pūjā bera* also demonstrates the expressive nature of the drumming in Low-Country to the highest degree (Appendix 6, track 37).

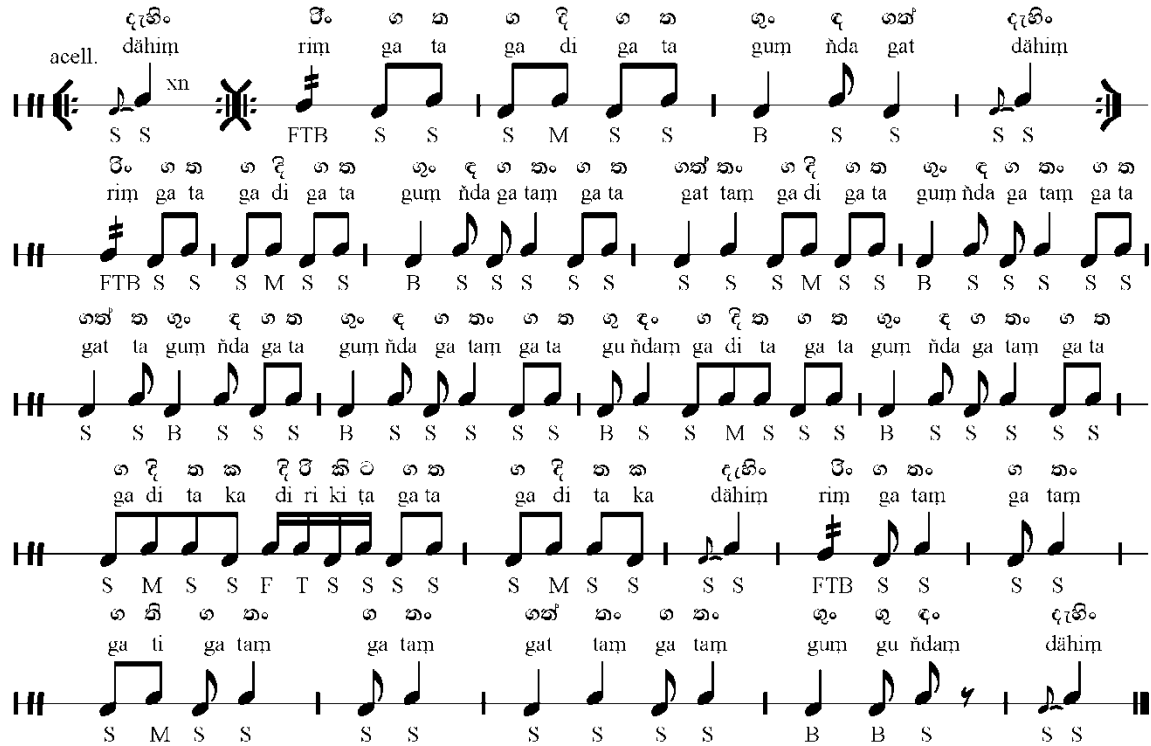


Figure 115: The *pūjā bera* pattern

#### 4.18 Chapter summary

Several features of Low-Country drumming in the *devol maḍuva* ritual contribute towards the expressive nature of the drumming. Most of the features are aspects of stretched timing. Improvisation does not feature in the drumming however, spontaneity, particularly in drumming embellishments and variations, enliven the performance. The dynamics of the drumming remain relatively loud throughout the ritual and therefore are not a contributing feature of expression. I have identified a number of aspects of timing in Low-Country drumming:

- 1) The irregularity of the pulse
- 2) The illusive nature of the beat

- 3) The irregularity of the beat
- 4) Manipulation of tempo (i.e., the use of acceleration and deceleration)

The first feature, the irregularity of the pulse occurs because the drummers feel the pulse in terms of *akṣara*, as opposed to feeling the pulse as strictly regular. Therefore, ‘pulse’ in Low-Country drumming, can be considered as synonymous with ‘*akṣara*’. I consider this to be the most important characteristic of timing in Low-Country drumming. This is best demonstrated in the subtle rhythmic nuances in short repetitive patterns (i.e., *sarala pada*-D and *sarala pada*-B4). The second feature, being the illusive nature of the beat, is also an important characteristic that appears in a number of patterns. Several examples are listed:

- 1) *Magul bera* and *vaṭṭam pada*-A
- 2) Last phrase of *vāṇḍum ata*-E, *ārambhaka pada* and *sural*

In the *magul bera* and *vaṭṭam pada*-A, the beat is illusive because the patterns consist of a string of short *akṣara* sequences. In *vāṇḍum ata*-E the last phrase is played in a rushed manner. In *ārambhaka pada* and *sural*, technical phrases are played quickly. In addition to this, the variation in durations of rolls, within repetitive drumming and longer patterns, often makes the beat illusive. The third feature i.e., the irregularity of the beat, is most apparent in the performance of patterns in *bara*, and these also show the most extensive connection between the drummer and the dancer (explained further below). The fourth feature of timing, which is the manipulation of tempo and, particularly the use of acceleration and deceleration is best illustrated in the performance of the *magul bera* pattern. The subtle manipulation of tempo also features during the performances of short

repetitive drumming patterns, as revealed in the performances of *kotal padē*, *pidēni dīma* and *Vāhala*. Other patterns such as *paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam* feature acceleration to an extent which features the drummer changing the *akṣara* sequences of the pattern, throughout its repetitions.

The study of the *devol maḍuva* reveals that there is no tonal relationship between the drumming and vocal recitations in the Low-Country. However, a strong connection exists between the drumming and the metrical component of recitation. This is most evident in the performance of *saudam* where the drumming rhythmically imitates the sounds of the text recited with the voice. This connection is less apparent in performances of longer patterns (*kālapaṇḍama padē*, *kavi tāla*, *Pattini pada*). Nevertheless, singing is stretched to fit in with the certain emphasized points of these patterns.

This chapter has also provided insights into the relationship between the drummer and the dancer in the Low-Country tradition. As mentioned in Chapter 3, both dancers and drummers work off the same vocabulary of patterns. The most extensive connection between the drummer and the dancer is seen during the performance of patterns in *bara* tempo. During these patterns the dancer is allowed to dictate the timing and the drummer plays filler strokes (*kannilam*) and decorative phrases in order to enhance the dancer's expression. The irregular beat of these patterns and the clutter of filler strokes in turn contribute toward the expressive nature of the drumming. A specific type of slow pattern, *kavi tāla*, requires the drummer to work out what pattern the dancer is performing without advanced notice. Analysis of dance steps in *kavi tāla* in this chapter revealed that

a number of *akṣara* sequences (i.e., *dāhiṃ*, *doṃ*, *riṃ* or *guṃ*) are danced consistently the same way. These *akṣara* act as ‘signposts’ and assist the drummer in playing in unison with the dancer. These *akṣara* are also used by dancers as cues during repetitive dance segments (i.e., *pidēni dīma*, *tel vāḍavavīma*, *sāṇḍā samayama* and *Vāhala*). A similar example of a cue made by the drummers, is the use of the roll at the beginning of set-embellishment patterns in *sarala pada* (i.e., set-embellishment of *sarala pada-A*). Certain dance gestures are accompanied on the drums with specific phrases (i.e., spinning in *ārambhaka pada-D*). There are noticeable differences among the drumming that accompanies dance performances which represent supernatural beings of different nature (i.e., Pattini, Devol, Garā and Vāhala). Dances with gestures of salutation show a direct link to the structure of their drumming pattern (i.e., *vāñḍum at*). In short patterns, in particular *sarala pada-B4*, the dancer complements the irregular pulse of the drumming with subtle polyrhythmic movements between the hands and feet.

Three compositional features, extension, repetition and foreshortening, are common to most drumming patterns in the Low-Country. Even though these are not explicitly recognized in the tradition, experienced artists acknowledge how the identification of these features helps them memorize the drumming patterns. Certain drumming patterns (i.e., *irraṭṭiya* in the *kālapañḍama* segment), which are only performed in part during contemporary *devol maḍuva* rituals, suggest that performers are often unaware of these structures. Because of this lack of awareness, these patterns risk being lost, altered and disordered.



Drummers learn the patterns of the Low-Country repertoire with reference to the *akṣara* sequences of the patterns. As a result of this, the use of patterns in odd numbered beats, especially in five beats, is common. Learning patterns in terms of *akṣara* sequences also allows the drummers to freely alternate between patterns with different numbered beats. An example of this was shown in the *bisō kapa* segment where the drummers alternated between a pattern in seven beats and a pattern in four beats. Different pattern types in the repertoire of Low-Country drumming contain unique characteristics. Short repetitive patterns (*sarala pada*) generally consist of a regular beat and include variations and set-embellishments. These consist of *akṣara* that produce a balance of high and low sounds. In addition, *akṣara* with low, resonating, sounds are found at the start of most *sarala pada*. Patterns that accompany specific ritualistic acts, such as cleansing and seeking permission from the deities, are considerably condensed, when performed at the start of segments that are dedicated to other rites (*yahan dākma*, *kotal padē*, *dummala padē*). An ‘embedded pattern’ in seven beats is common to a number of different drumming patterns (i.e., *sarala pada-A* and *kavi tāla-A*) and this remains hidden from the artists themselves. Longer patterns, which are specific to some segments, are more complex and made up of different sections. It is these patterns that are regarded by the artists to be of the highest value. A number of these longer patterns are no longer performed as part of the ritual repertoire. I suggest that this is reflective of the changing nature of the ritual and its move towards entertainment. Segments with simple repetitive patterns and acrobatic dance displays are highly popular. The longer patterns that do remain usually include some form of acrobatic display. The loss of drumming patterns which do not accompany any dancing (such as extensions of the *magul bera*), means that younger drummers are less

likely to feel challenged and inspired to reach the highest level of drumming in the tradition. Because of this, I conclude that the *devol maḍuva* ritual will not continue to serve as an effective training ground for the younger drummers as well as it has done in the past.

## Chapter 5

### The *Tovil* Ritual (Kalu Kumāra *Samayama*)

Prasantha recognizes that the performance elements of the Kalu Kumāra *Samayama* ritual “convey the intense power of the demons associated with the ritual.”<sup>155</sup> This chapter examines the features of performance that contribute towards expressing this power, with references to drumming, dance and voice. The artists who conducted the *tovil* ritual studied in this chapter are highly experienced.<sup>156</sup> However, in the Low-Country tradition, *tovil* rituals are not exclusively performed by the most experienced artists. This means that, several longer patterns and examples of drumming improvisations and embellishments presented in this Chapter, are not necessarily characteristic of the music of the contemporary *tovil* ritual. However, I include these in this Chapter, in order to illustrate their connection with the drumming of the *devol maḍuva* discussed in Chapter 4.

#### 5.1 Ritual space

As with the other rituals the performance space is important and an overview of the ritual space is illustrated below, in preparation for the study of the ritual performance. Most of the altars and offerings are placed in a line alongside each other, inside the house, in the main lounge area. These are dedicated to various demons of the ritual such as the Kalu Kumāra demon, Mahasōna and the demons of Three Watches. Artists refer to this row of altars, collectively as the *vīdi raṅga mandalaya* or ‘the street of performance.’ The

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<sup>155</sup> Prasantha Rupathilake, personal interview, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka, 9 Dec 2007.

<sup>156</sup> Daniel Rupathilake, Prasantha Rupathilake and Simon Kaṭṭadi Mahattaya (this is an honorific title).

patient is seated on a mat directly opposite these altars during the ritual. Among the offerings, is a chair covered in a white cloth which has limes, areca sprigs, incense and flowers placed on it. These limes are sometimes used for a rite known as lime-cutting. This is a simple rite carried out to seek protection from malevolent influences, in which a number of charmed limes are cut over the patient's head using an arecanut cutter. A number of ceremonial objects: a coconut, some rice, a lime, pole used to crush grains (*mōl gaha*), and two medicinal plants known as *tolabō* (*crinum asiaticum*)<sup>157</sup> and *sīrāssa* (*cissus quadrangularis*)<sup>158</sup> are placed on a tray in front of the main altar. All these items are either of medicinal value or symbolic of disinfectants.<sup>159</sup> A live rooster, with its legs tied is also placed in front of the main altar and this is a symbolic offering to the demons of the ritual. The only altar of the ritual built outside, is a small altar, in which the offerings for the Kalu Kumāra demon are placed.

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<sup>157</sup> N.a., *Crinum Asiaticum* (Linn) 2006, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka, 2 Apr 2009  
<[http://www.agri.ruh.ac.lk/medicinalplants/medicinal\\_plants/families/amaralidaceae/plants/Tholabo.html](http://www.agri.ruh.ac.lk/medicinalplants/medicinal_plants/families/amaralidaceae/plants/Tholabo.html)>.

<sup>158</sup> C. N. B. Bambaradeniya et al., *A Biodiversity Status Profile of Lunama - Kalametiya Wetland Sanctuary* (Colombo: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, 2005) 26.

<sup>159</sup> Daniel Rupathilake, personal interview, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka, 13 Aug 2008.

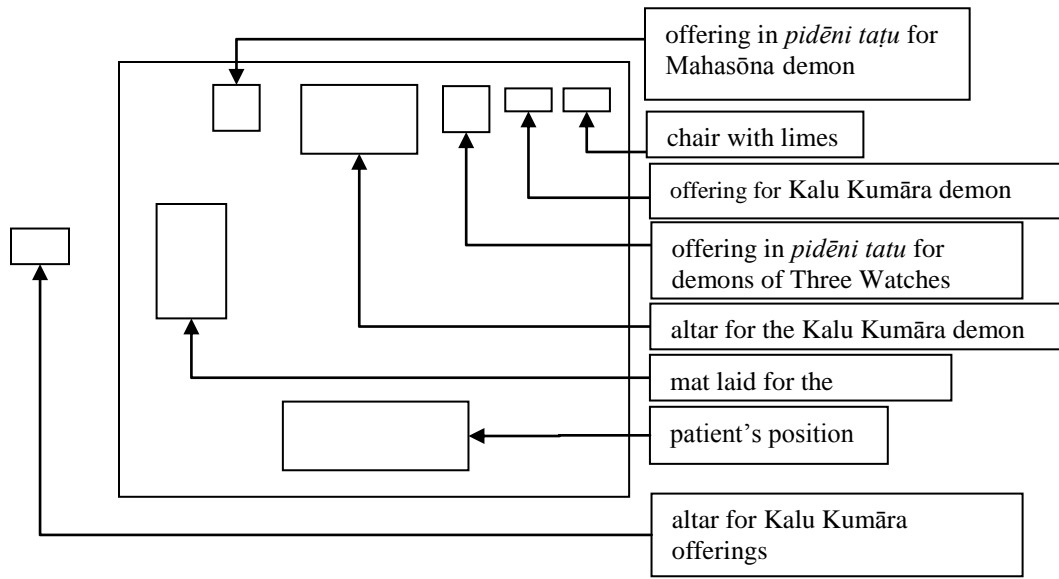


Figure 116: Ritual space of the Kalu Kumāra *samayama*

## 5.2 Ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*) and the observance of five precepts

At the commencement of the Kalu Kumāra *samayama* ritual, the patient is invited to sit on the designated mat directly opposite the main altar. Two members of the house are invited to hold a white curtain (*kaḍaturāva*) in front of the patient. This is intended to block the patient's view of the main altar until the curtain is taken off during the performance of the ritual. A short recitation of a *stotra* (praise) and *sanna* (exposition) follows in the style of PR-E. The recitations give thanks to the Buddha and wish that the *dōsa* affecting the patient will be vanquished by the act of performing this ritual. The leader of the ritual (*kaṭṭaḍi mahattaya*) invites the patient to light several oil lamps placed on a stool in front of the patient. He also asserts that the merit gained by holding the ritual will protect the patient and the new born baby from ill health and malevolent spirits. All

present in the ritual space observe the Five Precepts<sup>160</sup> as the drummer performs the *magul bera* in order to commence the ritual. All three movements of the piece are played, standing on the side of the ritual space. This standing posture, which is adopted for the majority of the ritual, is intended to convey the intense power of the ritual.

### 5.3 Recital of verses of salutation to the Three Refuges

Performers recite a number of *stotra* and *sanna* as a thanksgiving to the Three Refuges in the style of PR-E. These are unaccompanied. De Silva notes that these verses are commonly recited at all major Buddhist rituals.<sup>161</sup>

### 5.4 Inviting the demons of the Three Watches

This segment commences with the dancer, holding a pair of lit-torches, reciting verses in the style of UPR-A. This vocal style, which is unpitched, unmetrical, fast and recited with attack, conveys a feeling of invoking the demons. The following drumming pattern, recognized as a *vaṭṭam pada* (*vaṭṭam pada-B*), accompanies the recitations. The pattern is played on the *yak beraya* at a high volume. Examples of free-embellishments of the pattern noted below, are also played at a similar high volume (Appendix 6, track 38).

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<sup>160</sup> The Five precepts state: “not to kill, steal, be unchaste (not further defined), lie, or take intoxicants that may lead, through carelessness, to infringe the first four.” Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 24.

<sup>161</sup> De Silva, 59.

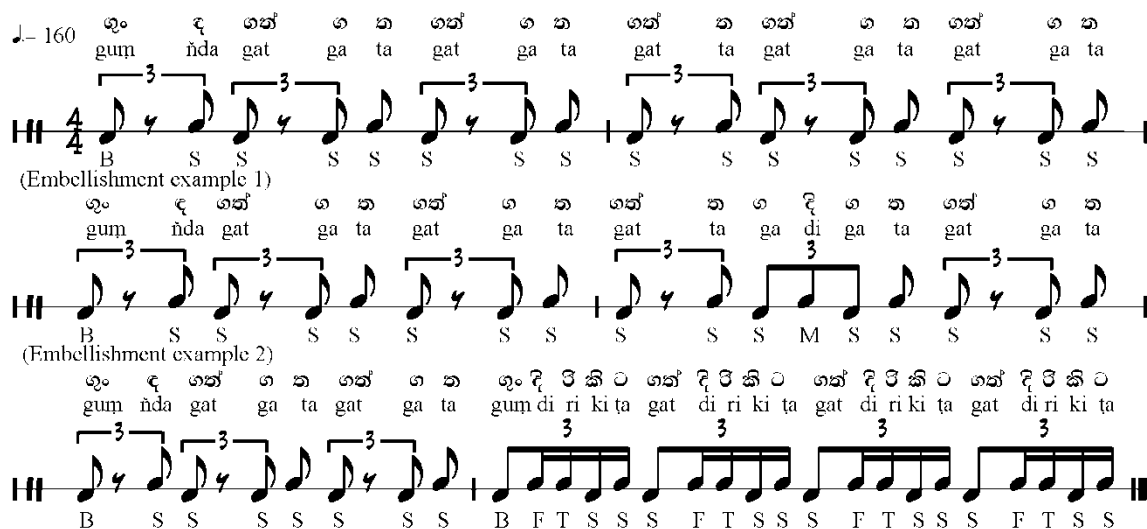


Figure 117: Vāṭṭam pada-B

During the recitations, the dancer incenses the altars and throws handfuls of resin, igniting flames in the ritual space. The segment is concluded as the dancer blesses the patient to the accompaniment of the *āvaḍana padē* in a similar manner to the *devol maḍuva* ritual.

## 5.5 Placing of ceremonial objects on the patient's feet

The recitations of this segment describe the origins of the ceremonial objects that will be placed at the patient's feet at the conclusion of the segment. In the performance, the dancer holds each of the ceremonial objects as their particular origins are recited. The performance commences to the drumming of *tovil* pattern-A (Appendix 6, track 39), which is felt in three beats.

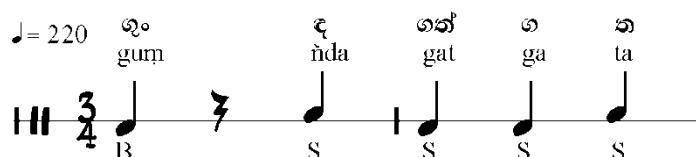


Figure 118: Tovil pattern-A

The recitation accompanying the above pattern is in the style of PR-A. However, artists recognize the singing of this particular instance as singing *keṭi kavi* (short verses). In this style, each line of a verse, which is relatively short, is freely stretched without feeling the need to make the duration of each line equal. The performance of these verses is further explored in Chapter 6 (section 6.4). The loud sound of the drumming generally overpowers the voice.

The short verses conclude with a longer pattern similar to a *kavi tāla* of the *devol maḍuva* ritual. The pattern includes a number of occurrences of the *doṃ akṣara*, which is played on the drum at a high volume. The dancer over-exaggerates the movements when performing the pattern. The recitation is in the style of PR-D similar to *kavi tāla* discussed in the *devol maḍuva*. However, in this ritual this vocal style is presented more roughly, with the addition of intermittent shouts of ‘oh!’ These features of the drumming, dance and the voice combine to further convey the intense power of demons.

The recitations continue with a change of metre, and initially with *sarala pada*-D. An example of a free-embellishment within this pattern, as played by Prasantha, is shown below (Appendix 6, track 40). It is more spontaneous compared to the pattern’s set-embellishment played in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. Nevertheless, it closely follows the structure of the set-embellishment of the pattern.



♩ = 190

ගුං රිං  
gum rim

ග න ගත නං ග න ගුං ගු ඤා ග න ග දි න ගත දැහිං  
ga ta gat tam ga ta gum gu ñda ga ta ga di ta gat dāhim

B FTB S S S S S S B B S S S S M S S S S

දොං තත් ගු ඤා ගු ඤා ග න ගු ඤා ත ග න ගු දි රි කි ල ත රි කි ල තත් දැහිං  
dom tat guñda gum guñda ga ta guñdam ta ga ta gum di ri ki la ta ri ki la tat dāhim

S/B S B S B B S S S B S S S S B F T S S S F T S S S S S

Figure 119: *Sarala pada-D* embellishment

The metre is changed again to *sarala pada-C* on the dancer's cue. These cues are often subtle and are made with a change of vocal phrasing. This will be explored closely in the context of the *bali* ritual in Chapter 6, as the use of these types of cues are a common feature of the *bali* ritual performance. The change to a new metre is often indicated by a performance of dance variations within the pattern. Artists describe the drumming accompanying the dance variations in *sarala pada-C* as occurring in the manner of 'a continuous flowing string' and thus I label the segment as improvisatory. Improvisation in Low-Country drumming is discussed further in the context of the *bali* ritual in Chapter 6. The following improvisatory segment is played loudly at a quick tempo using short subdivisions (Appendix 6, track 41). It includes a number of powerful *dom akşara*. These features of the improvisation again contribute towards conveying the nature of the demons. A similar improvisation is explored in Chapter 6, in order to further contrast the difference in the drummer's approach between the two rituals.

♩ = 120

Figure 120: Improvisation on *sarala pada-C* in *tovil* ritual

The metre changes again to *sarala pada-D* followed by *sarala pada-B*. The recitations conclude with a short standard ending (*hamāre*) which is associated with the pattern. A short unaccompanied recitation of a *sanna* marks the conclusion of the segment, as the patient is requested to place their right foot on the ceremonial objects. The patient is then requested to say ‘*kāpai*’ or ‘it is done,’ and this indicates that the rite just carried out will free the patient from any *dōsa* that may be affecting them.

## 5.6 Unveiling of the curtain to display the altars

The recitations of this segment (PR-A) invite demons of the Evening Watch (*sāndā samayama*) to be present. The dancer performs this segment with two torches and ignites

flames by throwing handfuls of resin, similar to the *pidēni dīma* of *devol maḍuva* ritual. Initially, the drumming accompanies with *tovil* pattern-A, then it is followed with *sarala pada*-D and *sarala pada*-B. The segment also includes the performance of a number of decorative patterns with the torches (*pañdam pada*) which are introduced with *ārambhaka pada*-A and *ārambhaka pada*-D. As already mentioned with reference to several patterns in the *devol maḍuva*, these *pañdam pada* feature the acceleration of tempo throughout each repetition, which is characteristic of the expressive nature of Low-Country drumming. The segment comes to a close with the drumming of *vaṭṭam pada*-B, where the dancer abruptly pulls off the white curtain held in front of the patient. The abruptness of removing the curtain is intended to shock the patient. The dancer immediately blesses the patient using the torches with the *āvaḍana padē*. Following this, the patient witnesses a short display of fire, in order to be further overwhelmed. Daniel Rupathilake says such a performance “helps eliminate any bad energy and clear the blood of the patient.”<sup>162</sup> The drumming, which is very loud enhances the above atmosphere.

## 5.7 Dance segment dedicated to the demons of the Three Watches

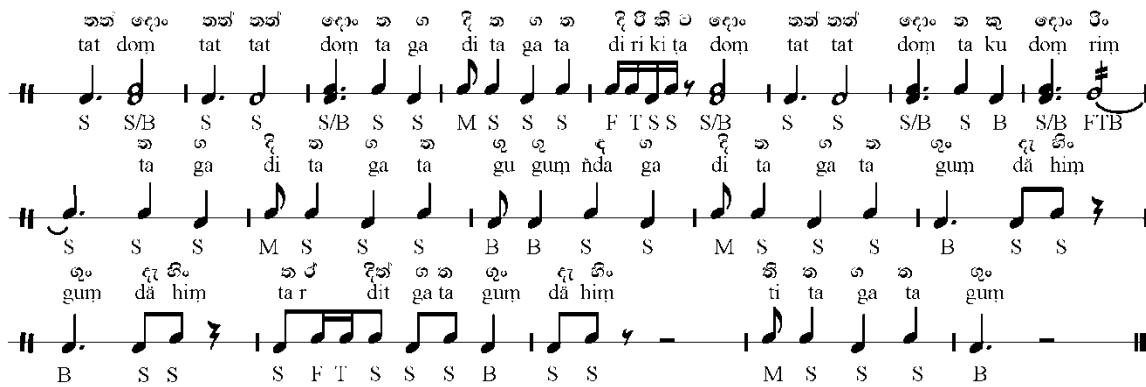
This segment, which lasts around an hour, is an offering to the demons of the Three Watches. Among the patterns performed, are the *pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam* discussed in the context of the *sāndā samayama* segment of the *devol maḍuva* ritual. In addition to these patterns, the greater experience of the performers in this ritual allows them to perform a number of longer patterns within this segment. These longer patterns include the *pañdam*

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<sup>162</sup> Daniel Rupathilake, personal interview, Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka, 15 Dec 2007.

*pada iratti* which have been omitted from the segment of *sāndā samayama*, as mention in Chapter 4.

The other longer patterns are *yak panti* and *yakini pada*. When performing these patterns, the drummer is initially invited to play solo, and then they are repeated by the dancer. The solo drumming performance, which is played loudly, demonstrates the physical power of the instrument in addition to the skill of the musician. When playing *yak panti*, the drummer uses filler strokes (*kannilam*) similar to performances of patterns at *bara* (slow tempo). However, in this instance, the filler strokes are played sparsely. Because of this, they do not create a rhythmic clutter, unlike in the performance of *bara* patterns of the *devol maḍuva* ritual. Both these features (i.e., the louder dynamic and the sparse filler strokes), of the drumming contribute towards expressing the demonic nature of the ritual. The first *yak panti* pattern is transcribed below (Appendix 6, track 42).



**Figure 121: *Yak panti* pattern**

Prior to the performance of a *yak panti*, the dancer performs a number of decorative patterns featuring the torches. One such pattern transcribed below (*paṇḍam pada-D*), sees

the dancer bending over to either side, as he performs these decorative moves with the torches (Appendix 6, track 43). The drumming pattern contains similar phrases to patterns performed in the Devol and Garā segments of the *devol maḍuva*. Similar to these latter performances, the phrases of the following pattern musically symbolize the demonic nature of the supernatural beings associated with the performance.

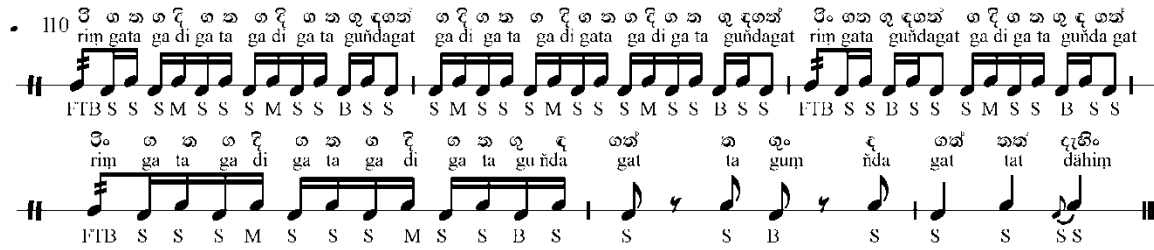


Figure 122: Decorative pattern with torches (*paṇḍam pada-D*) in *tovil* ritual

This segment concludes similarly to the previous segment, where the dancer blesses the patient using the torches with the *āvaḍana padē*.

## 5.8 Offering food (*dola*) to the demons and the *hat pada pelapāliya* (series of seven dances)

In preparation for this segment, which lasts roughly for an hour, a pot containing the offerings of food that is intended for the demons is placed on a stool in front of the patient. Initially, a number of recitations in the style of PR-A mention the mythical stories of the demons. The drumming accompanies the verses with repetitive patterns which are featured in the *bali* ritual (*bali* pattern-B and *bali* pattern-D). Therefore, these will be explored in Chapter 6. The series of seven dances consists of seven patterns which are performed prior to the offering of the food to the demons. The first four patterns are performed with ritual objects: vessel of turmeric water (*kaha diyara kotala*), incense holder (*aṅguru kabala*), king-coconut, live rooster and a white shawl. The fifth pattern

features the use of hand claps by the dancer in an act which invites the demons to accept the offerings. The final dance is an offering of fire to the demons. As an act attaining permission to perform the seven dances, the dancer commences the segment with the *yahan dākma*, which is introduced with *ārambhaka pada-A*. The first *vattāma* of the piece is omitted. This maintains continuity with the rest of the performance which, by and large, includes short repetitive patterns. The first dance of the series is performed with the vessel of turmeric water. *Ārambhaka pada-F* commences a number of verses, in the style of PR-A, which mention the birth story of the vessel of turmeric water. The drumming accompanies the recitations with *sarala pada-D*. The verses are concluded with *ārambhaka pada-A*, and this begins the performance of the *kotal padē*, which was explored in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. This dance is concluded with *ārambhaka pada-C*. A round of blessings with the *āvaḍana padē* follows. Similar blessings are carried out at the end of each dance of this series. The second dance is performed with the incense holder. Initially, verses about the birth of this ritual object are recited (PR-A) to the accompaniment of *sarala pada-B* on the drums. Similar to the previous dance *ārambhaka pada-A* commences the *dummala padē* and a performance of a *surala* associated with this pattern. The dance concludes, similarly to the previous dance of this series. The third, fourth and fifth dances which are performed sequentially with the king-coconut, rooster and the shawl, all follow a similar format. The performances commence with recitations (PR-A) which mention the origin of each object, to the accompaniment of repetitive patterns such as *sarala pada-B*, C and D. At the end of the recitations, *ārambhaka pada-A* begins a short repetitive pattern which is specific to each dance (Appendix 6, tracks 44-46).

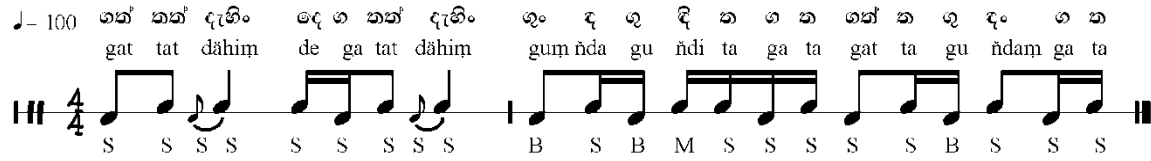


Figure 123: Pattern danced with a king-coconut in the *hat pada pelapāliya*

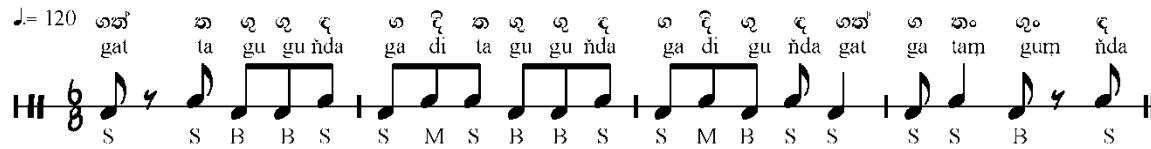


Figure 124: Pattern danced with a live rooster in the *hat pada pelapāliya*

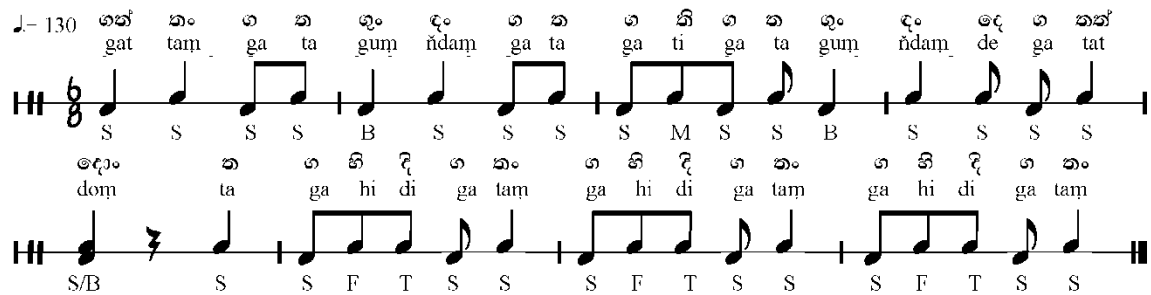
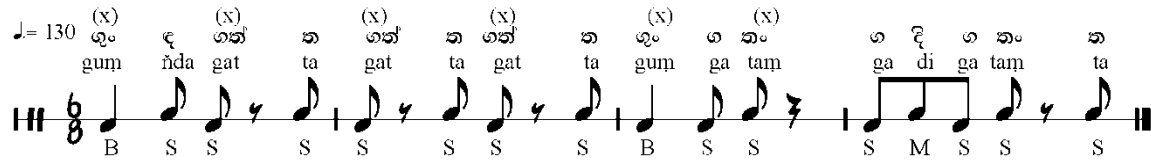


Figure 125: Pattern danced with a shawl in the *hat pada pelapāliya*

At the end of the dance performance with the shawl, the dancer is blessed with the *āvaḍana padē* as in the other dances of this series. In addition, the shawl is laid on the patient's head, in order to place the pot containing the offerings on the patient's head at the end of this segment. The sixth dance of the series is a performance of the dancer clapping his hands, in a manner which is intended to invite the demons to accept the offerings (Appendix 6, track 47). The hand claps are played at marked points of the following drumming pattern.



**Figure 126: Pattern featuring hand claps in the *hat pada pelapāliya***

The seventh dance of the series, which offers fire to the demons, continues without a break, as the drumming changes to the *tovil vaṭṭam pada-A*. The offerings of fire are made as before. However, in this instance the dancer heightens the intensity of the performance by appearing to be in a slight state of trance. The drumming during this performance is gradually sped up and the pattern transforms into the short repetitive pattern associated with the *pidēni dīma* segment of the *devol maḍuva*. Similar to the Vāhala segment of the same ritual, artists only acknowledge the trance state of the dancer as a technique of dramatizing the performance. Intermittent yells of ‘oh!’ also enhance this effect. The series of the seven dances concludes with *ārambhaka pada-C* and following this, the dancer places the pot of offerings on the patient’s head. A family member assists the patient by holding the pot on her head.

A set of recitations (PR-A) which follow, entreat the Kalu Kumāra demon to accept the offerings being made. These recitations are accompanied with the *yādini mātraya* (invocation beat, *sarala pada E1*) in five beats. Prasantha’s experience is demonstrated in the following free-embellishment played within the *yādini mātraya* (Appendix 6, track 48). This type of embellishment is not heard in the performance of the same pattern in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. The segment concludes with blessings followed by the placing of the offerings on the main altar inside the ritual house.





Initially, the offering is placed on a stool in front of the patient with a lamp affixed on top.

The dance performance commences with *ārambhaka pada-A*, repeated three times. Immediately following, is the *yahan dākma* which is limited to the third *vaṭṭama* similar to how it is performed in the Vāhala segment of the *devol maḍuva*. The drumming of this segment is consistently loud and is played with a high level of intensity. The dancer, as mentioned in section 5.8, appears to be in a state of trance for the duration of the segment, in order to convey the demonic nature of the ritual. The *yahan dākma* is followed with *kotal padē*, *dummala padē* and an offering of fire. The drumming of this latter performance is similar to *pidēni dīma* of the *devol maḍuva* ritual. During this performance the dancer visits different rooms inside the ritual house and throws handfuls of resin in the air in order to ignite flames. He also does the same outside, around the altar in which the offering of the Kalu Kumāra demon will be placed. The performance concludes as the dancer picks up the offering from the stool and places it on the patient's head and blesses the patient with the *āvaḍana padē* played by the drummer.

After a brief break, a short set of recitations (PR-A) accompanied by *sarala pada-D* signals a procession, in which the patient is guided outside towards the altar of the Kalu Kumāra demon. During the procession, the patient holds the offering placed on her head and two family members hold a white cloth over the patient. Once at the altar, the patient is requested to kneel on a white cloth laid on the ground, in front of a stand built for the offering. The dancer utters a *sanna*, which wishes that the offering about to be made will

protect the patient and the newly born child from all *dōsa*. The patient respectfully places the offering in the altar. As described at the conclusion of section 5.5, the patient is requested to say ‘*kāpai*’ or ‘it is done.’ The performer requests the patient to repeat another phrase ‘*tīñdui nivāranai*’ and this further asserts that the offering has been accepted and the rite is confirmed.

### **5.11 Breaking of the clay pot (*kalas biñdīma*)**

As discussed in the background of this ritual in Chapter 1, the clay pot (*kalaha*) symbolizes a vow to carry out a Kalu Kumāra *samayama* in the event that the patient conceives. The breaking of this pot, which is done during this segment, symbolizes the fulfillment of this vow. The performance during this segment is considerably laid back compared to the rest of the ritual, which suggests the closure of the ritual.

The performance commences with *ārambhaka pada-A*, and this is followed by a set of recitations (PR-A) which mention the origin of the clay pot. The dancer holds the clay pot during the recitations, which are accompanied with *sarala pada-D*. At the conclusion of the verses the patient is blessed and the clay pot is handed over to the patient for a moment. The patient is assured that all *dōsa* affecting her life will be minimized as the vow to hold the ritual will soon be fulfilled. The performer takes the clay pot and continues the recitations (PR-A) with *sarala pada-B*. He smashes the clay pot in front of the main altar and this action is accompanied with a short introductory pattern on the drums (*ārambhaka pada-F*). A performance of a *saudama* follows, as traditionally done after a major performance in order to receive the payment for successfully conducting the

ritual. The structure of this pattern is similar to the Pattini *saudama*, examined in the *devol maḍuva* ritual.

### 5.12 Ritual conclusion

In a brief segment a number of verses (PR-A) are recited in order to give thanks to the supernatural beings propitiated during the ritual with *sarala pada*-D followed by *sarala pada*-B. The dancer cues the performance of *ārambhaka pada*-A.<sup>163</sup> Following this, the solo drumming of the *pūjā bera* marks the conclusion of the ritual, as in the *devol maḍuva*.

### 5.13 Chapter summary

The expressiveness of Low-Country drumming in the *tovil* ritual highlights the overwhelming demonic nature of this ritual and it is mainly achieved with the use of loud drumming. The indoor nature of the *tovil* ritual emphasizes the physical power and intensity of the drumming more than any other ritual studied. The majority of the drumming patterns in the ritual are short and repetitive (i.e., *vaṭṭam pada*, patterns of *hat pada pelapāliya*, *sarala pada* and *paṇḍam*). Several of these patterns are also played in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. However, free-embellishments and improvisatory segments within some of these patterns (i.e., *sarala pada*-C, D, E1), demonstrate a higher level of spontaneity compared to the *devol maḍuva*, as they are played by experienced artists. The longer patterns, which also demonstrate the experience of the performers, are played intensely with lesser use of filler strokes in order to highlight the power of the ritual. The

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<sup>163</sup> This cue is discussed in the context of the *bali* ritual conclusion in section 6.11.

frequent use of the *dom akşara* also enhances this. The dance also adds to the drama of the *tovil* ritual with the extensive use of fire throughout. The body movements of the performer, who appears to be in a trance state at times, are exaggerated in the slower patterns. In addition, the dancer's movements in the decorative patterns, while using the torches, further express the heightened drama of the ritual. The recitation style of PR-E used on several occasions of this ritual conveys a feeling of invoking demons. Aside from this, vocal yells and shouts at various points of the performance contribute towards conveying the demonic nature of the *tovil* ritual.

## Chapter 6

### The *Bali* Ritual (*Graha Pūjāva*)

The *graha pūjāva* which represents the generic *bali* ritual, is mostly soothing in nature. The patterns which are specifically associated with ritualistic procedures are minimal. Instead, the majority of the patterns accompany vocal recitations which are featured throughout the ritual. These patterns, being repetitive, are played in a style that is unique to *bali* rituals. The other significant patterns of the ritual are longer and serve either as endings or transitions from one repetitive pattern to another.

As *bali* rituals are practised by the most experienced artists, it is acknowledged that this ritual's performance is of the highest standard in the Low-Country tradition. A number of features in the performance such as the use of the hand-held bell, advanced techniques that produce subtle sounds of the drum, large range of dynamics, improvisation, embellishment and regularly alternating metres, collectively enrich and shape the performance. Drumming embellishments in this ritual can generally be identified as free-embellishments. The level of spontaneity in performance is relatively high in this ritual and this sees the extensive use of cues by artists. This chapter aims to explore the above performance features with a focus on the *bali* drumming. A brief description of the ritual space which follows provides necessary background for the discussion of the ritual's performance.

## 6.1 Ritual Space

The main altar of the ritual is dedicated to the planetary deities (*graha deviyo*). This is made from plantain stems and coconut leaves, often using a chair as a base. The backdrop of this main altar displays pictures of the *graha deviyo*. A decorated tray placed inside this altar is used to place the offerings of food to the deities on during the ritual. A smaller altar containing offerings of flowers may be made, depending on the scale of the ritual. A chair covered in a white cloth with limes, identical to the *tovil* ritual, is kept on one of the sides of the altar. The same ceremonial objects used in the *tovil* are placed on a tray in front of the altar. The patient sits on a mat directly opposite the main altar. At the start of the ritual, a white curtain is held in front of the patient, which is later removed during the ritual.



Figure 128: The main altar of the *bali* ritual with the planetary deities

## 6.2 Ceremonial drumming (*magul bera*) and the observance of five precepts

The commencement of the *bali* ritual is identical to the *tovil* ritual discussed in the previous chapter. The only difference is that the drummer plays the *magul bera* seated on

a mat placed on the side of the ritual space, rather than standing as in the *tovil*. The drummer adopts this posture throughout the *bali* ritual. The posture itself signifies the soothing nature of the *bali* ritual.

### **6.3 Recitation of verses in salutation to the Three Refuges**

These recitations are also identical to the ones heard in the *tovil* ritual. Additional verses in the same style (PR-E) salute a number of major deities of the Sinhala Buddhist pantheon including the Gods of Four Warrants, Pattini and the planetary deities (*graha deviyo*).

The hand-held bells (*mini geḍiya*), which are played by both the dancers Daniel and Susantha, throughout the initial segments of the ritual are introduced within these recitations. They are played in a constant continuous manner, at the start of the verses which mention the deity of the land (*polō mahi kāntāva*). The recital of these verses is intended as a salutation and a request for the deities' permission to perform the ritual. Artists do not recognize any significance as to why the hand-bells are introduced during this particular verse. However, the addition of the bells makes a significant textural change for the vocal recitations and heightens the intensity of the performance.

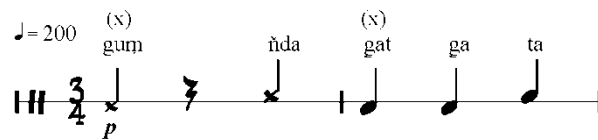
### **6.4 Recitation of verses of *bali* ritual inception**

The drumming begins as an accompaniment to a new set of recitations, which mention the inception of the *bali* ritual. The transition from the previous verses to these is made without a break and the performance is continuous. The introduction of the drumming



energizes the performance by adding another texture, just as the hand-held bells had done in the previous segment.

The repetitive pattern played on the drums is labelled as *bali* pattern-A for purpose of analysis. As the drumming commences, the bells are played at the points of the pattern marked with an (x). This drumming pattern is identical to *tovil* pattern-A. However, in this ritual the pattern is played with considerable subtlety compared to the *tovil*. The drummer achieves this by using advanced techniques discussed in Chapter 3. For example, the sound of the *akṣara gum* is usually manipulated using one of the pitch bending techniques, and the *akṣara ṇda* is usually played with a finger flick or a light stroke to the edge of the drum head. The transcriptions in this chapter will not include any technical symbols due to the difficulty of accurately notating the use of complex advanced techniques. Sinhala characters will also be left out, in order to enhance the clarity of the transcriptions of relatively complex drumming passages. A selected number of transcriptions, such as the one below, will show with crosses, the *akṣara* most often produced using advanced techniques.



**Figure 129: *Bali* pattern-A**

As discussed in the *tovil*, artists describe these verses as *keṭi kavi* (short verses). The style in which the verses are sung (PR-A), sees the performers freely lengthening each line of a given verse. This often makes the length of different vocal lines vary. The following transcription illustrates the performance of one instance of such a verse (Appendix 7,

track 1). In this, Daniel sings the first line. The length of this first line ends up to be eight cycles of *bali* pattern-A. Susantha, who sings the second line of the verse, waits until Daniel has completed the first line. Unaware and unconcerned about the length of the line which had just been recited, Susantha commences the second line at the start of the next drumming cycle. Sometimes this means that the two voices slightly overlap at the start of each line. The second line in this instance is 12 cycles of *bali* pattern-A. The third line, again sung by Daniel, has a length of 11 cycles of *bali* pattern-A. The fourth line of the verse, sung by Susantha is 12 cycles of the pattern. Because the length of each line is varied in this way, the drummer needs to have a thorough understanding of the dance and know each line of the verse, in order to play embellishments. During the first two lines, Prasantha uses advanced techniques to play softer and draw out the subtleties of the drum. During these lines, the dancers move on the spot. In the latter half of the verse i.e., the third and fourth lines, the dancers move around in a circle. The drum embellishments of these lines are played in response to these movements of the dancers. Drum embellishments within repetitive patterns in *bali* rituals are always prompted by the dancer in this way. These embellishments are significantly louder than in the first half of the verse.

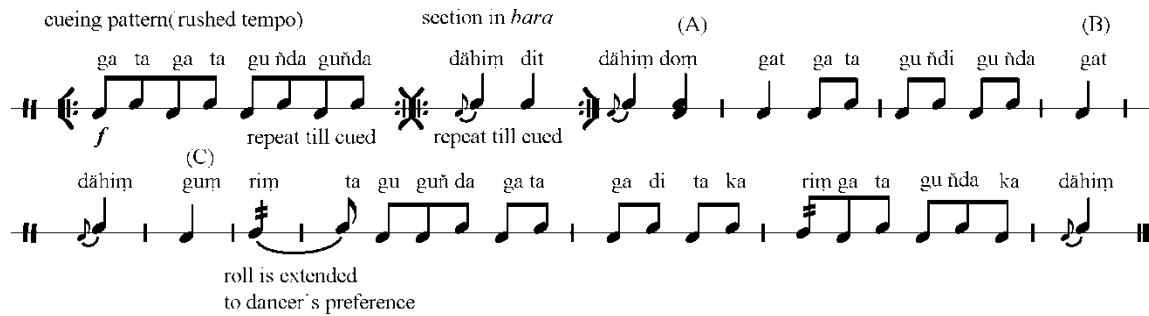
$\text{♩} = 200$  (dancers on the spot)  
 Daniel line 1  $\text{gum} \text{nda} \text{gat ga ta}$   
 Susantha line 2  $\text{gum} \text{nda} \text{gat ga ta}$   
 (dancers move in circle)  
 Daniel line 3  $\text{gu gum nda ga tam ta gu gum nda ga di ga ta gum nda gat ga ta}$   
 Susantha line 4  $\text{gugunda guṇḍagata gumṇḍa gat gata gugunda guṇḍagata gum re ga ta dahim ta ga di gata gugunda guṇḍagata}$   
 $\text{ga tam ta ga di ga ta gum re ga ta gat ga ta ga di ga ta gum nda gat ga ta}$

Figure 130: Transcription of *bali* pattern-A

*Bali* pattern-A ends with a short transitional pattern (labelled transition pattern-A). This pattern shows how the *bali* ritual drummer uses his intuitive knowledge of the dance to freely embellish the sections of this pattern played at *bara*. The timing is dictated by the dancers and the drummer uses *kannilam*, as discussed with respect to *bara* patterns in the other rituals. However, the embellishments are much freer in this ritual. The regularity of the beat is totally discarded as the drummer freely plays rhythms in between the spaces where the dancers step the *akṣara* of the pattern. Not all *akṣara* stepped by the dancers are marked by the drummer and this makes it difficult for the listener to hear how the drumming is related to the framework of the pattern.

The basic framework of *akṣara* in the pattern is as follows. When discussing this pattern, artists only refer to this basic framework, as the drumming embellishments are spontaneous in each performance. The time codes for the points marked A (00'15''), B (00'19''), and C (00'21'') of the audio example of the pattern (Appendix 7, track 2)

attempts to assist the reader in following the framework of the pattern. The first repeated section is in a tempo faster than the pattern played previously. This is one of several cueing patterns that the dancers make when leading into a transition. The remainder of the section is in *bara*.



**Figure 131: Transition pattern-A**

The transition leads to the first recitation of ritual inception verses in metrical time (PR-A). Artists recognize these verses as *tāl kavi* (verses in metrical time). Compared to the short verses examined earlier, when playing verses in metrical time, the drummer constantly embellishes the pattern.

The drumming pattern, labelled *bali* pattern-B, initially accompanies these recitations. The pattern is felt in a slow four-beat cycle. The subdivisions of the beat in the embellishments of the pattern are divided into groups of three to six. The artists do this effortlessly because they strongly feel the longer four-beat cycle of rhythm. The elements of dance and the voice in the performance of this pattern make the performance as a whole, polyrhythmic. The dancer's steps are in five and the recitations are phrased in three. The polyrhythmic nature of this pattern makes the beat seem extremely illusive. Sandhoris Jayantha identified this pattern as a slow variant of *sarala pada-C* from the

*devol maḍuva* ritual. The connection between the two patterns will be explored later (section 6.5). Another feature of metrical recitations in *bali* rituals is that the singer always starts a set of verses by himself. The following transcription outlines an example of the rhythm of a vocal phrase that would cue the start of *bali* pattern-B. The phrase is sung in a slurred manner.

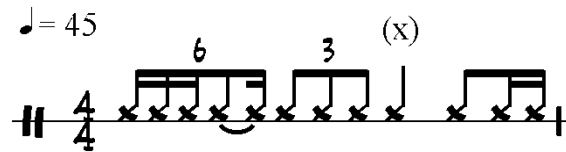


Figure 132: Rhythm of vocal cue for *bali* pattern-B

The drummer is expected to accompany the singer within the first cycle of the pattern. The point marked (x) on both transcriptions above and below, is where the drummer usually starts playing *bali* pattern-B during this first cycle.



Figure 133: *Bali* pattern-B

The *bali* pattern-B is one of few occasions where the drummer improvises within a “model”<sup>164</sup> or repetitive framework of a verse that is fixed in length.<sup>165</sup> Here, I use the term ‘improvise’ rather than ‘embellish’ as the rhythmic motifs heard in the drumming do not follow a repetitive formula or cycle. Artists of the tradition do not explicitly recognize improvisation as a musical process, and therefore are unable to comment on

<sup>164</sup> R. Anderson Sutton, “Do Javanese Gamelan Musicians Really Improvise?,” *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*, eds. Bruno Nettl and Melinda Russell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 71.

<sup>165</sup> Two other instances are the improvisation in *sarala pada*-C in the *tovil* (section 5.5) and in *bali*-pattern-E in section 6.6.

improvisatory thought processes in any detail.<sup>166</sup> However, as mentioned in section 5.5, artists distinguish improvised drumming such as this, by identifying the drumming to ‘occur in a continuous flowing string’ or *vālaṭa galāgena enava*.

The drumming of *bali* pattern-B is used in this chapter as an opportunity to analyze the ‘building blocks’<sup>167</sup> of its improvisation. For the purpose of analysis, I consider three separate performances of *bali* pattern-B played by the three artists Prasantha, Daniel and Susantha. The analysis attempts to recognize a set of rhythmic motifs, from which the artists draw to improvise within this pattern. It also shows any individual characteristics of the drumming of the three artists when improvising on this pattern.

Prior to analysing the drumming of the pattern, it is necessary to explain the framework of the verse, in which the improvisation occurs. The verse in this instance consists of four lines and the length of one line accommodates two cycles of *bali* pattern-B. As explained with *bali* pattern-A, the drumming improvisations are made in response to the dancer moving with more emphasis. The dancer may cue the improvisations in such a manner during the second, third or fourth lines. Once the cue is made the improvisations occur till the end of the verse. The end of the verse is also cued by the dancer and the improvisation finishes on the first beat of the next cycle. The drumming at the start of the

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<sup>166</sup> However, Sutton considers artists’ comments to be important in the analysis of improvisation: “We need to pay heed both to the sound structures and to what musicians who have produced these structures have to say about the process whereby they produced them.” Sutton, 73.

<sup>167</sup> Nettl uses this term to identify “units of musical content such as gestures or motifs ... whose manipulation is a major component of improvisation in some cultures.” Bruno Nettl and Melinda Russell, eds., *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 14.

verse is generally subtle, similar to *bali* pattern-A. The improvisatory segments are generally louder, however this varies among the three artists.

The first set of transcriptions below is two verses of Prasanth's improvisation (Appendix 7, track 3). The improvisations begin at the end of the second line of the verse. The drumming prior to this is not transcribed as it is an embellishment of the basic pattern. Each sequence of *akṣara* of the improvisation is labelled for analysis. Any repetitions of a particular sequence of *akṣara* will be labelled the same as at its first occurrence. The label uses a number prefixed with a letter which represents the artist i.e., P for Prasanth, D for Daniel and S for Susantha. In addition, the labelled sequences of *akṣara* are also intended to highlight the absence of any strict repetition which occurs throughout the entire verse.

• - 45  
line 1

*p*

line 2

(P1)  
gatiḡatagatiḡatagataka  
5  
*f* (P6)

(P2) (P3) (P4) (P1) (P2) (P3) (P5)

guṇḡditagum̃ riṅgatagattam̃gata gaditagata  
5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

line 3

(P7) (P3) (P1) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11)

gatiḡatagat  
5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

line 4

gum̃dom̃gatagum̃dom̃ riṅgatagadigattam̃ guṇḡditagat riṅgatdegadirikiṭa  
5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

Figure 134: Prasanth's *bali* pattern-B improvisation verse 1

• 45

line 1

*f* *p*

(P4) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P16)

line 2

*f*

gataṃtaguṃ riṃgataḡataḡuṇḡa guṇḡiṃ tagagata gatta gadita gata gadigataḡuṃ

(P13) (P14) (P15) (P16) (P13) (P14) (P17) (P18)

line 3

gumḡditkaḡataḡattāṃ gadigataḡattitaḡata

(P3) (P19) (P1) (P8) (P20) (P21) (P22)

line 4




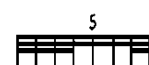
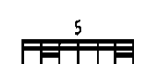
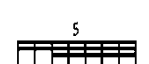
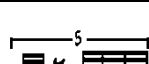
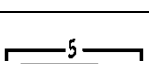
gatiḡataḡattāṃgata doṃtagataṃḡitgata guṃdoṃḡataḡigata gattatḡeḡadiriḡita

Figure 135: Prasantha *balī* pattern-B improvisation verse 2

In the table below, I categorize the above 22 *akṣara* sequences of Prasantha's improvisatory segment into 13 groups of rhythmic motifs, considering only the rhythmic component of the *akṣara* sequences. Such a framework will be used for this analysis as the choice of *akṣara* within a rhythmic motif occurs spontaneously to each performance and performer.

	Rhythmic motif	<i>Akṣara</i> sequences
1.		P4
2.		P1
3.		P2, P10
4.		P5, P9, P13, P15
5.		P6, P18



6.		P7, P16
7.		P8, P17
8.		P11
9.		P19
10.		P3, P20
11.		P21, P22
12.		P14
13.		P12

**Table 4: *Akṣara* sequences of Prasantha**

The second set of transcriptions below, present two verses of *bali* pattern-B played by Daniel (Appendix 7, track 4). The *akṣara* sequences of the improvisatory segments are labelled similar to Prasantha's. Daniel's change of dynamics between the pattern embellishments and the improvisations is relatively small compared to Prasantha's.

♩ = 45  
line 1

*p*

line 2

(D1) gadigatagattamgata (D2) gumditagatagum ringata ga ta ka (D3) gat titagatagata (D4) gatamtagattatguṇḍa (D5)

*mf*

line 3

(D2) (D3) (D6) gattagaditagata (D7) gatamta gataka (D2) (D3) gumṇḍagaditagat ringata gattamgat (D8) (D9)

line 4

(D10) gaditagadiritagata (D10) (D10) guṇḍagugumṇḍaguṇḍa (D11) guṇḍinṭagatgata (D12) (D8) ringatagumṇḍaka (D13)

Figure 136: Daniel *bali* pattern-B improvisation verse 1

♩ = 45  
line 1

*p*

line 2

line 3

(D14) (D12) (D6) (D10) (D2) (D9) (D4) (D7)  
gumṇḍaguṇḍa



*mf*











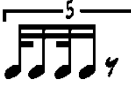


line 4

(D15) (D15) (D10) (D16) (D12) (D17) (D9)  
gadigatagat gumṇḍagugumṇḍagata gumṇḍagatam

Figure 137: Daniel *bali* pattern-B improvisation verse 2

The table below amends the previous table (table 4) by including *akṣara* sequences from Daniel's improvisations, which are categorized into 12 groups of rhythmic motifs.

	Rhythmic motif	<i>Akṣara</i> sequences
1.		P4
2.		P1

3.		P2, P10
4.		P5, P9, P13, P15, D4, D6, D11
5.		P6, P18
6.		P7, P16, D15
7.		P8, P17
8.		P11
9.		P19, D1
10.		P3, P20, D9
11.		P21, P22
12.		P14, D7, D12
13.		P12
14.		D3, D13
15.		D2, D8

16.		D10
17.		D5
18.		D14
19.		D16
20.		D17

**Table 5: Akṣara sequences of Prasantha and Daniel**

The final two transcriptions are of the same pattern played by Susantha (Appendix 7, tracks 5-6). His improvisatory passages are played at a similar volume to Prasanatha's.

♩ = 45

line 1

line 2 *p*

(S1) (S2) (S3) (S4) (S1) (S5) (S6) (S7)

gumṇḍitagataguṇḍa guṇḍimtagatgata gatagadjirikitagata gatamtagataka gumṇḍitagattam ta gattaguṇḍimṇḍata godigataregata

line 3 *f* (S8) (S9) (S7) (S1) (S10) (S11) (S12)

gat tam ga ti ta ga ta gumṇḍata ga ta ka gumṇḍatagattam ringa ta de ga di ri ki ta

line 4



**Figure 138: Susantha *bali* pattern-B improvisation verse 1**

♩ = 45

line 1  
p

line 2  
f

(S13) gat tam ta (S9) (S7) (S14) ga di ta guṇḍa (S15) guṇḍatagattamgata gatguṇḍagattamta (S16) (S7)




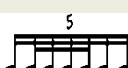




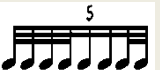
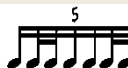

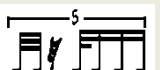
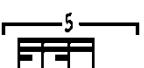
(S1) (S2) (S17) gattagaditagata (S18) gatamtagatgata guṇḍitagatagum (S19) (S15) (S11) (S12)




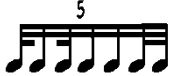

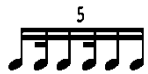





(S20) gatditagatguṇḍa (S15) (S21) gatditagattam (S22) gatigatagattamgata (S1) (S15) (S23) gattagūṇḍamgattam (S12)

**Figure 139: Susantha *bali* pattern-B improvisation verse 2**

The final table of the analysis below includes 14 rhythmic motifs used by Susantha. It shows that aside from the level of dynamics, and the starting points, the three improvisations consist of a high degree of similarity. Eleven motifs (shaded rows of the table) of the three artists' vocabulary are common to two or more artists. These shared motifs can be considered to be the motifs that make the improvisations idiomatic of the Low-Country drumming style in this particular context. This means that the accepted level of originality and individuality of improvisation in Low-Country drumming is very subtle.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Sutton makes similar conclusions of improvisation by Javanese gamelan musicians with reference to *gambang* playing: "One may call the part 'improvised' only if one stresses that originality and invention are evident at only a very subtle level and that too much of either will result in unidiomatic playing." Sutton, 83.

	Rhythmic motif	<i>Akşara</i> sequences
1.		P4, S9, S14
2.		P1
3.		P2, P10
4.		P5, P9, P13, P15, D6, D11, S1,S17,S21
5.		P6, P18
6.		P7, P16, D15
7.		P8, P17, S20
8.		P11, S12
9.		P19, D1, S22
10.		P3, P20, D9, S15
11.		P21, P22
12.		P14, D7, D12, S2, S4, S18
13.		P12

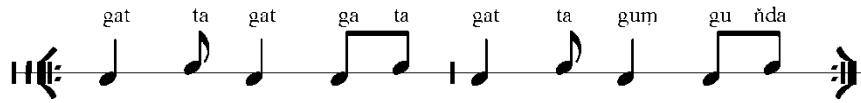
14.		D3, D13, S5, S6, S10, S16, S23
15.		D2, D8, S19
16.		D10, S3
17.		D5
18.		D14
19.		D16
20.		D17
21.		S7
22.		S8
23.		S11
24.		S13

**Table 6: Akṣara sequences of Prasantha, Daniel and Susantha**

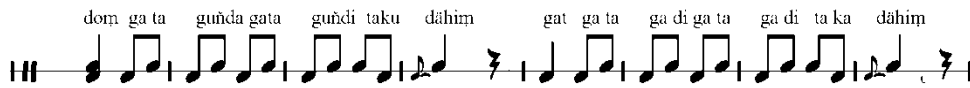
A second transitional pattern, labelled transition pattern-B, concludes the verses of *bali* ritual inceptions (Appendix 7, track 7). This transition is longer compared to the transition pattern-A. The structure of it is common for all the remaining transitions of the ritual. The majority of the sections in the pattern are spontaneous and variable. However,

the final section is performed consistently in each performance. In the audio example provided, the transition is cued by the dancer with the *akṣara* sequence *riṁ dahim̐*. The section (labelled A), on the transcription below, is a *vaṭṭam pada* where the dancers walk around in a circle. Within this section the dancers perform several repetitive patterns (one example is labelled B) which is started slowly and then quickens throughout the repetitions (similar to patterns explored in *sāṇḍā samayama* of *devol maḍuva*). The drumming within these repetitive patterns may sound improvised, however it is relatively consistent throughout different performances. The patterns are broken up with the *vaṭṭam pada*. The second section (labelled C) consists of parts from the transition pattern-A, and this maintains continuity within the two transitions. The final section of the transition (labelled D) is the fixed component and artists identify this section as an *aḍauva*.

#### Section A



#### Section B



#### Section C





## Section D

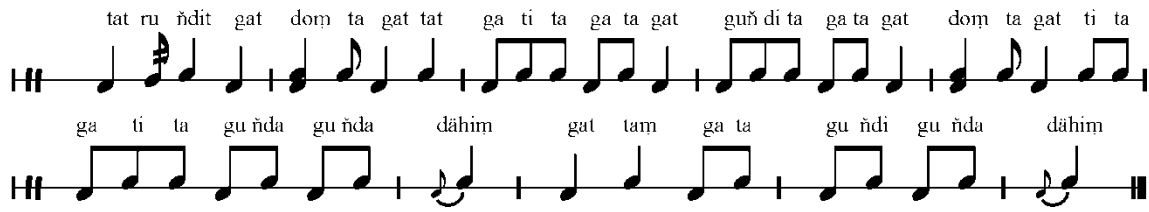


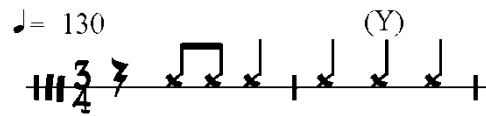
Figure 140: Transition pattern-B

### 6.5 Placing of ceremonial objects on the patient's feet

Similar to the *tovil* ritual, the recitations during this segment describe the origin of the ceremonial objects that will be placed at the patient's feet at the conclusion of the segment. The segment opens with a blessing of 'āyubō āyu ārakṣā vēvā!' literary, 'may you have a protected long life!', and this is carried out at the start of each segment for the remainder of the ritual. A short introductory pattern usually accompanies this blessing (*ārambhaka pada-F*). The recitations of verses are in the style of PR-A and these verses change through a number of metres. A number of transitional patterns are associated with these metres. Their inclusion in the performance depends on the scale of the ritual as mentioned in the start of this chapter.

Several verses are initially recited with the drumming of *bali* pattern-B. The transition from *bali* pattern-B to another pattern is often made subtly. In this instance the pattern changes to one which is in three (labelled *bali* pattern-C). The change is cued by the change of phrasing of the vocal recitations. Compared to the vocal phrasing that cues *bali* pattern-B (figure 132), the rhythm of the vocal phrasing which cues *bali* pattern-C, notated below, is more even. However, the change is subtle because the new pattern i.e., *bali* pattern-C is played at a tempo which is roughly three times that of *bali* pattern-B.

This makes the transition between the two patterns smooth. The point marked (Y) is where the drummer usually starts to accompany the voices.



**Figure 141: Rhythm of vocal cue for *bali* pattern-C**

When a pattern is changed in this way, the dancer commonly moves with intent, which cues the drummer to embellish in the new metre before it is played in its basic form. This kind of transition cannot be performed successfully unless the drummer is highly responsive to the subtle vocal cues of the dancer. The transcription below provides two verses of this pattern. The supplementary audio recording (Appendix 7, track 8) starts in the last line of a verse in *bali* pattern-B, in order to demonstrate the vocal change. On the audio, the following transcription starts at 00'11". The use of dynamics is also apparent as the drumming in the first verse is considerably louder than the second. The second verse of the transcription also reveals that this pattern is an embellished version of *sarala pada*-D using advanced techniques.

**Verse 1**

(vocal cue) ga di gata guṇḍa gata gataṁ dāhim gaditaku domguṇḍa gata dāhim gaditaku guṇḍaguṇḍagata dāhimgaditaku

line 1  
  
 domgatagata dāhimgatitaku domguṇḍagata dāhimgati taku domgatagata dāhimgatitaku domguṇḍagata dāhimgati taku

line 2  
  
 domguṇḍagata dāhimgatitaku domgatagata dāhimgati taku domguṇḍagata dāhimgatitaku guṇḍagatagat gadit kaṭagataku

line 3  
  
 dāhim riṁ gatagattamgata gatigatagata gat guhidigadirikitagat guṇḍitadeguṇḍa domgatagat gadit ta gata gat guhidigadirikitagat

line 4  


**Verse 2**

line 1  
  
 dāhim gattamgatam gat guṇḍa guṇḍa guṇḍa gata gum ṇḍam tam ki ti ta ka gat tat gum gat ta gat gum

line 2  
  
 guṇḍamgat tam ki ti tat tam gum gat tat ta ku guṇḍamgat tam ki ti taka t gat tam gum gat tat ta ku

line 3  
  
 guṇḍam tam ki ti taka gat ruṇḍa guṇḍa gadi gata gat tat tam ki ti taka tam gumgumguṇḍaka

line 4  
  
 gumṇḍam tam ki ti taka gat tam gum gat tat ta ku guṇḍagum tam ki ti taka gat tam gum gat tat gata

**Figure 142: *Bali* pattern-C and embellishment**

This metre concludes with the same *iraṭṭiya* (ending) that is associated with the end of the *kālapaṇḍam* segment in the *devol maḍuva* ritual. Unlike current performances in the *devol maḍuva*, this pattern is performed in full at this ritual.

The next pattern in the ritual, labelled *bali* pattern-D, is the only instance in the rituals studied where the music shows a connection to the Up-Country tradition of drumming and singing. The vocal range of the singing style (PR-F), which is around 10 semitones, is wider compared to any other vocal recitations of the Low-Country. This pattern provides musical evidence to support the view that the *bali* ritual was “initially associated

almost exclusively with Kandyan royalty.”<sup>169</sup> The basic pattern is as follows (Appendix 6, track 49). As seen with other patterns in this ritual, advance techniques are used to make the drumming lighter.

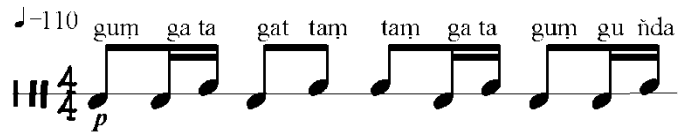
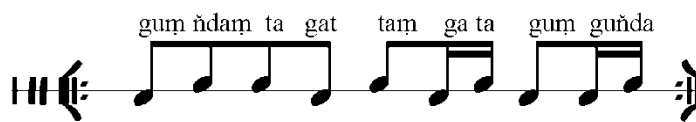


Figure 143: *Bali* pattern-D

The transition associated with this pattern, labelled transition pattern-C, shows further influence of the Up-Country tradition (Appendix 6, track 50). It is in four beats and contains a regular beat throughout, unlike any of the other transitions seen in this ritual. However, its framework is similar to transition pattern-B, where a *vaṭṭam pada* (section A) and variations (section B) are followed with a fixed pattern or *aḍauva* (section C). The transcription of the pattern with the different sections labelled is as follows.

#### Section A



#### Section B



<sup>169</sup> Fleisher, 38.

## Section C



Figure 144: Transition pattern-C

The next two metres (labelled *bali* pattern-E, F) are embellishments of the Low-Country patterns *sarala pada*-C, B respectively. In the *bali* ritual these patterns are embellished and varied using advanced techniques. One particular embellishment of *bali* pattern-E shown below (Appendix 7, track 9), demonstrates the pattern's connection to *bali* pattern-B. The shaded phrases highlight the similarity of the two patterns and provide reasoning for why Jayantha claims that *bali* drumming-B is a slow version of *sarala pada*-C.

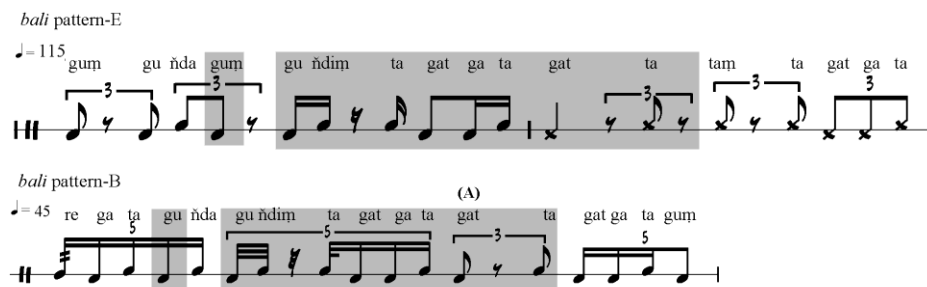


Figure 145: Relationship of *bali* patterns E and B

The segment ends with a recitation of a *sanna* with the shaking of the hand-bells to place the ceremonial objects at the patient's feet. Similar to the *tovil* ritual, the patient is invited

to place their right foot on the items and say ‘*kāpai*’ or ‘it is done,’ as commonly seen in instances when offerings are made.

## **6.6 Chanting of the thread with *pirit* (*pirit huya*)**

In this segment, the dancer holds the *pirit huya*, which is a white ball of string associated with the protective Buddhist chant, *pirit*. The string also features in the *pirit* ceremony mentioned in Chapter 1. It is customary for Sinhala Buddhists to wear a ‘chanted’ *pirit* string around ones wrist for protection against malevolent spirits.

The opening of the segment is similar to the start of the ritual. The recitations in this segment describe inception stories of the *pirit huya*. A *sloka* and *sanna* in the style of (PR-E) follows with *bali* pattern-A then *bali* pattern-B. As described in the previous segment, *bali* pattern-B is changed smoothly to another pattern with a vocal cue. In this instance, it is changed to *bali* pattern-E, which is played roughly at double the tempo of *bali* pattern-B. This pattern is another instance where the drummer improvises, however the vocabulary of the improvisation will not be considered here. Similar to the transition to *bali* pattern-C in the previous segment, this pattern begins with an improvisation. A similar improvisation of this pattern was explored in the *tovil* ritual in section 5.5. In contrast to the *tovil* performance, the tempo in this instance is slower and the drumming is less busy (Appendix 6, track 51). It is played with less attack and there’s also a lesser use of the powerful *dom akṣara*. This reflects the drummer’s intention to perform within the general feel of the ritual, which is more tranquil compared to the *tovil*.



Figure 146: Improvisation in *bali* pattern-E

The recitations continue in *bali* pattern-D, C and G. The segment concludes with a short ending pattern similar to the one associated with *bali* pattern-C. The string is given to the patient to hold as the performers recite a Buddhist chant (PR-E) to pay homage to the Three Refuges and bless the patient.

## 6.7 Unveiling of the curtain to display the altars

This short segment of unveiling the curtain consists of no new musical material. The dancer performs with a lit torch during this segment. In brief, the segment opens with a recitation of a *sloka* (PR-E) accompanied by hand-bells, followed by recitations of verses that describe the unveiling of the curtain in *bali* patterns A, C and G. The curtain is unveiled abruptly, similar to the *tovil* ritual. However, this moment is less dramatic in comparison to the *tovil* ritual. Hence, this moment is emphasized with the dancer igniting a number of flames with resin, dancing towards the altar and performing *ārambhaka pada-A*.

## 6.8 Offerings made to planetary deities

The offering of food to the *graha* deities are presented either in a pot with a small lit-torch affixed on top and on a tray. A recitation of a *sloka* in the style of PR-E is made at

the beginning of the segment. A family member is then asked to place the food in the tray made for the offerings, in the main altar. The short performance of the segment opens with recitations while making the offerings, in the style of PR-G accompanied by the same *vaṭṭam pada* seen at the start of the (*vaṭṭam pada*-B). This is followed with a lighter and faster version of *bali* pattern-A and the hand bell is shaken freely. The drumming is considerably lighter compared to the *tovil*. However, the performance does convey a feeling of anticipation when invoking supernatural beings.

### **6.9 Singing verses for the planetary deities (*graha kavi*)**

The segment of *graha kavi* highlights the different metres of the Low-Country *bali* rituals.<sup>170</sup> The verses describe the *graha* deities and make references to their appearance, their palaces, vehicles and other luxuries. The verses also request the blessings of these deities to the patient. The metres of the verses are changed on cue in this segment with no significant transitions in-between. Some metres are changed with standard ending-phrases or *hamāre*, which are associated with each repetitive pattern (see Appendix 1-A). The beat within each metre is generally regular and the dynamics of the drumming remain relatively constant at a low level. Most patterns played during this segment have already been introduced (i.e. *bali* pattern-C, *bali* pattern-D *bali* pattern-E, *bali* pattern-F). A pattern unexplored up until this point, labelled *bali* pattern-H, is in seven beats. As noted in the transcripition below it is played lightly, solely using advanced techniques (Appendix 7, track 10). The example of the embelsihment occurs at 00'12" in the supplementary audio track.

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<sup>170</sup> Sandhoris Jayantha, 1 September 2007.



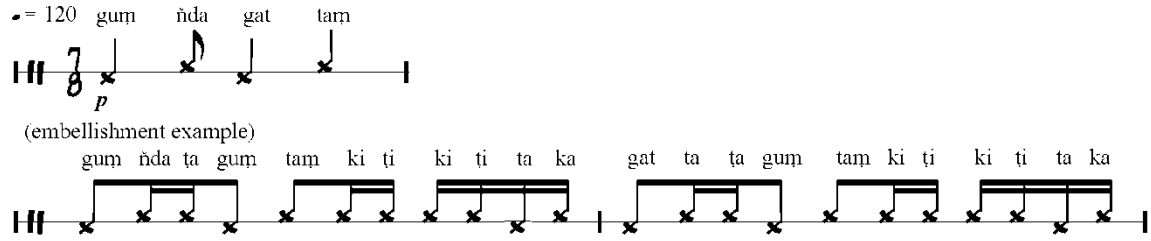


Figure 147: *Bali* pattern-H and embellishment

## 6.10 Blessings with oil lamp threads

A family member is requested to light 54 oil lamp threads and hand them over to the performer reciting verses in front of the patient. The number is associated with the different types of *dōsa* a human can be subjected to. The recitations are in the style of PR-A with *bali* pattern-F. The verses intend to extract the *dōsa* out of the patient's body. Each thread is caste on a bowl of coconut milk which is believed to be a disinfectant and symbolizes a form of irradiating the patient's *dōsa*.

## 6.11 Warding off the malevolent spirits and ritual conclusion

This segment, being the most intense of the ritual, consists of recitations (PR-A) that intend to ward off malevolent spirits around the ritual house. The dancer moves through the house throwing handfuls of resin igniting flames in an act of cleansing the entire house. The drumming pattern *sarala pada*-D is played aggressively as in the *tovil* ritual. Recitations of thanksgiving to deities and teachers follow immediately. The dancers cue and perform the phrase *guṇḍa guṇḍa gata gata*, as introduced in transition pattern-A, in order to conclude the dance with *ārambhaka pada*-A. The *bali* ritual concludes as the *pūjā bera* is played in a similar way to both the other rituals studied. During this solo

drumming piece the dancers pay homage to the Buddha. Finally, the patient is reassured that all *dōsa* affecting him/her have been cancelled and he/she is invited to stand up.

## **6.12 Chapter summary**

The experience of the performers in the *bali* ritual allows for a high level of spontaneity in the ritual's performance. This is most evident in the segments of drumming that are improvised. Improvisation in drumming was explored in this chapter, in the context of one repetitive pattern (*bali* pattern-B) unique to this ritual. The analysis identified the framework and the 'building blocks' of the improvisatory vocabulary. It was discovered that a large proportion of the rhythmic motifs were common among different drummers and these can be considered idiomatic of the Low-country style. In addition, each drummer uses a small proportion of rhythmic motifs that are unique to the individual. This means that originality and individuality is only accepted in Low-Country drumming at a very subtle level.

Drumming embellishments in this ritual also consist of a significant element of spontaneity and this allows them to be labelled as free-embellishments. However, these differ from the sections of improvisations as the drumming consists of recognizable patterns of repetition. The embellishments played at lower volumes see the extensive use of advanced techniques on the drum. During these segments drummers draw out subtle sounds from the drum and contribute to the soothing nature of the ritual. The louder embellishments of drumming are played in response to cues given by the dancers and this is also the case with improvisations. Embellishment is seen extensively in the ritual's drumming in frameworks such as variable length verses, fixed length verses, repetitive

patterns and transitions. The spontaneous decisions require each performer of the ritual to have a deep understanding of drumming, especially dancing and vocal styles. Several dance and vocal cues that performers use were identified within this chapter. In addition, several types of transitions are used by the artists in the performance of the *bali*:

- 1) Smooth transition between sections (i.e., introduction of hand-held bells in section 6.3 and introduction of drumming in section 6.4).
- 2) Changing the vocal phrasing of the recitations (i.e., the transitions of *bali* pattern-B to *bali* pattern-C in section 6.5 and *bali* pattern-B to *bali* pattern-E in section 6.6).
- 3) Introducing a new pattern with embellishments and improvisations (i.e., the same transitions as mentioned in 2) above).
- 4) Long patterns that feature the dancers (i.e., transition patterns-A, B and C)
- 5) Standard ending phrases or *hamāre* associated with repetitive patterns (i.e., patterns in section 6.9)

The *bali* ritual consists of a relatively small vocabulary of patterns. One particular pattern in the vocabulary (*bali* pattern-D), is evidence of the original connection of the ritual to the Kandyan Kingdom. Some other patterns are derived from the *devol maḍuva* ritual. *Bali* pattern-B, being one such pattern, is the only polyrhythmic drumming pattern of the Low-Country repertoire. Even though the vocabulary of patterns is derived from these different sources, the transitions maintain continuity in the ritual. Artists finely balance the element of spontaneity and fixed aspects of the performance to make the *bali* ritual include the highest standard of Low-Country performance.

## **Chapter 7**

### **The Change in the Ritual and the Future of Low-Country Drumming**

The contemporary Sinhala Buddhist rituals are undergoing a number of changes: decline of the traditional ritual, rise of small-scale rituals, spiritual practices and large-scale, exhibitive displays of the traditional, communal rituals. In this chapter, it will be argued that these changes and the future of the Low-Country drumming is uncertain in the context of the ritual. The need to bring forth the performance elements of the Low-Country ritual to the concert stage, in order to ensure the survival of Low-Country drumming in the future is highlighted. This is particularly so, with performances that present the music of a single ritual, unlike the contemporary traditional music concerts which present excerpts of rituals as items which are limited to several minutes. A collaboration project which involved the author, three performer informants and three New Zealand musicians is presented as one successful approach to introducing the Low-Country ritual music onto the concert stage. A discussion of the process reveals aspects which made the collaboration successful and means by which Low-Country drumming can have a more world-wide exposure in the future.

#### **7.1 Decline of the traditional ritual**

Traditional, Sinhala Buddhist villages consisted of kin groups and nuclear families, which gave the villagers a strong sense of community. Because of this, the traditional rituals of *bali*, *tovil* and *maḍu*, were staged with the help from neighbours, relatives and

members of the community, regardless of whether the rituals were intended for the entire community or for an individual. Several scholars have associated the decline of the traditional rituals with a number of sociological and economic factors:

- 1) Loss of sense of community that existed in traditional villages
- 2) Rising costs
- 3) The extensive time demanded by rituals
- 4) Need to maintain privacy in contemporary society
- 5) Class associations with rituals (especially with *tovil*)

The lack of sense of community in contemporary society has meant that families staging rituals cannot depend on outside support. Obeyesekere and Gombrich recognize population growth and urbanisation as key factors which have created this diminished sense of community. They state that villages in “the whole western and southern littoral and the central area around Kandy”<sup>171</sup> have expanded until they converge. Further, “Socially, many villages within about twenty miles of Colombo have in fact become suburbs. These villages have little or no social cohesion.”<sup>172</sup> Urbanisation has also meant that the bulk of the material required for rituals cannot be gathered locally, unlike in the traditional villages.<sup>173</sup>

The rising cost of staging rituals is another factor which has contributed towards their decline. Fleisher states that the exorcism rituals in the rural South coast are becoming extinct as “staging the ceremonies has become outrageously expensive even by upper-

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<sup>171</sup> Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 68.

<sup>172</sup> Obeyesekere and Gombrich, 69.

<sup>173</sup> De Silva, 94.

middle-class standards.”<sup>174</sup> De Silva in his study of *bali* rituals in the Bentota region, confirms this view: “until recently, not very much money was needed to put on a major healing ritual, partly because the performers were paid in kind ... but today nothing can be done without money.”<sup>175</sup>

The amount of time demanded from the hosts of the ritual is another factor contributing to the decline of rituals. De Silva states that, the general amount of time demanded from a patient’s family, of a minimum of twelve hours and an evening without sleep “is simply not practical for those who now have to cope with a fast moving capitalistic economy.”<sup>176</sup>

Fleisher presents a similar view: “the time commitment which the ceremonies demand of participants, generally a minimum of fourteen hours and an evening without sleep, is simply not viable for those of either the lower or the middle classes who now have to compete daily in a capitalist economy.”<sup>177</sup>

The need to maintain privacy in urbanised society has also contributed towards the decline of the traditional ritual. De Silva quotes a client of one of the rituals he witnessed, who stated that “beating drums in my house informs others of what was going on in my house.”<sup>178</sup> This factor also threatens the performance aspects of the *tovil* and the *bali* rituals performed by my informants (see section 7.3).

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<sup>174</sup> Fleisher, 40.

<sup>175</sup> De Silva, 94.

<sup>176</sup> De Silva, 97.

<sup>177</sup> Fleisher, 40.

<sup>178</sup> De Silva, 97.

The class association with the rituals, in particular the *tovil* ritual has seen their rapid decline. "Demon exorcisms are mainly a working-class and peasant practice, and are devalued by the middle class often because of their class associations and connotations"<sup>179</sup> In addition, Simpson states: " ... for many Buddhists and particularly Buddhist priests, *tovil* was something of a bastard science practised by people of low caste whose rituals excite the senses in some very un-Buddhist ways."<sup>180</sup>

## 7.2 Rise of small scaled rituals and spiritual practices

In addition to the decline of the traditional ritual, scholars have identified a rise in spiritual practices (i.e., worship of god's in shrines), and small scaled rituals (i.e., transformed *bali* rituals), in contemporary society. Both these practices fulfil a primary function of the traditional ritual, which is to answer to practical individual hardship and crisis as they occur. Obeyesekere and Gombrich examine the worship of god's in several shrines in Colombo and suggest that these practices are new to Sinhala Buddhists. In contrast, in Fleisher's study of the Suniyam shrine on Baseline Road in Colombo, he concludes that these practices are a 'translation' of the traditional village ritual into urban society. De Silva's account of the transformed *bali* rituals (in particular, *at baliya* and *mal baliya*), suggests a similar connection with the traditional rituals. Nevertheless, none of these new spiritual practices include any drumming or dance. The two studies of worship of gods in shrines reveal that these are generally carried out by a single priest and focus on textual recitations. De Silva also confirms: "The smaller *bali* rituals that I observed

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<sup>179</sup> Kapferer, 18.

<sup>180</sup> Bob Simpson, "Review [Skill and Trust: The Tovil Healing Ritual of Sri Lanka as Culture-Specific Psychotherapy] " *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6.3 (September 2000) 533.

did not include dance, drumming and comedy, but focused more in recitations with the participation of one *adura* [priest], rarely two or more.”<sup>181</sup>

### 7.3 Large scale exhibitive displays

Given the rise of contemporary spiritual practices and small scale *bali* rituals, in addition to the decline of the traditional ritual, it is important to recognize where one could place the rituals *devol maḍuva*, Kalu Kumāra *samayama* and the *graha pūjāva* (or similar *bali* rituals) presented in Chapters 4-6. The majority of the *devol maḍuva* rituals I attended, attracted large audiences of around 500-1000 and were organized by youth community groups and political patrons. Some of these performances were videotaped and shown on national television. De Silva recognizes similar public performances of rituals as attempts of nationalist groups to preserve traditional culture.<sup>182</sup> Even though these performances preserve the ritual, their focus on entertainment see the drumming and dancing being compromised. De Silva foresees this: “it is difficult to see how these public performances can protect traditional forms of culture from external influences.”<sup>183</sup> Prasantha has expressed that this is one of the reasons as to why he has stopped performing in *devol maḍuva* rituals. Low-Country drumming in contemporary *devol maḍuva* rituals is being compromised in two ways:

- 1) Loss of patterns of high artistic value (e.g., *paṇḍam pada iraṭṭi* in the *sāṇḍā samayama* segment, extensions of the *magul bera*, *telme pada*, *Pattini pada*).
- 2) Replacement of patterns of high artistic value (e.g., in the *sāṇḍā samayama* and *telme* segments the longer patterns are replaced with simple repetitive

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<sup>181</sup> De Silva, 95.

<sup>182</sup> De Silva, 91.

<sup>183</sup> De Silva, 93.



patterns. In the *telme* segment the longer patterns are replaced with Western gymnastic performances).

The Kalu Kumāra *samayama* and the *graha pūjāva* are both small scaled rituals and have also been affected by some of the factors that have seen the decline of the traditional ritual (section 7.1). Even the most fully fledged *bali* ritual included in this study, is considerably condensed compared to the traditional *bali* rituals, such as those witnessed by Kariyawasam. Among the most notable differences are the time taken to set up, the replacement of the clay figures of the planetary deities with pictures of deities on paper. Kariyawasam's description below provides an account of the traditional *bali* ritual:

The preparation for the *bali* ceremony takes a day or two. Plantain stems, tender coconut leaves, coconut and arecanut racemes, powdered resin, limes, betel, torches made by wrapping clean rags around dry reeds (*vilakku* and *pandam*), coconut oil, flowers of different colors, and burnt offerings are among the main items needed. Plastic clay and reeds will be needed in large quantities to cast the *bali* figures. Life-size images of the planetary deities are molded from these and painted beautifully in bright colors... . When everything is ready, with the *bali* figures propped up leaning against a wall and the patient seated by a side facing the figures, the chief *bali* artist starts the proceedings by taking the Five Precepts and reciting a few benedictory stanzas while the drummers start drumming... . A live cock, with its legs tied together so that it cannot run about, is placed in a corner as an offering to the evil spirits. This is a kind of scapegoat, for all the evil influences of the patient are supposed to be transferred to this bird, which is released on the following morning. The ceremonies actually end early in the morning when the artists carry the clay images (*bali* figures) and the altars of offerings or *pideni-tatu* and leave them at the cross-roads that the evil spirits who give trouble are believed to frequent.<sup>184</sup>

In contrast, Daniel usually arrives at the residence, sometime after 2 pm in the afternoon, to arrange the ritual. The host family provides the required articles for the ritual, according to a list provided to them, several weeks in advance. The duration of these rituals, which is on average eight hours in length, is four hours less than the minimum

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<sup>184</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, 51. A more recent, yet, more or less similar description is given by de Silva.

time demanded for the traditional ritual. Most rituals are held on a Friday or a Saturday evening, because the ritual hosts are often free from any work commitments on the following day. The class association and the low regard for *tovil* explain the small and unfinished nature of the houses, in which the two Kalu Kumāra *samayama* were held. It also explains why these rituals are extremely rare compared to the *bali* rituals. I only encountered two Kalu Kumāra *samayama* rituals during my four fieldwork periods. Daniel generally charges 1500 rupees per individual for a ritual, which is considerably less than what a performer would charge for an evening's work in any other setting (i.e., popular music or Western music would be around 5000 rupees). Regardless of this lower price, often he can only afford to take one of his sons, even though he prefers the participation of both sons, as it makes the performance more colourful and less strenuous on the individual performers.

What most distinguishes the Kalu Kumāra *samayama* and the *graha pūjāva* from the rising contemporary spiritual practices mentioned above, is the fact that these consist of the performance elements of Low-Country drumming and dance to the highest level. The question arises as to why these rituals still consist of these performance elements. It can be explained with reference to the attitudes of my performer informants who conduct these rituals:

- 1) They have a strong connection with the performance outside of the practice of rituals. That is both Prasanth and Susantha are free-lance traditional musicians.
- 2) They recognize the importance of performance in the ritual. That is, all three artists Daniel, Susantha and Prasanth believe that the “drumming and dance

relaxes the mind and provide the patient with some psychological relief in the ritual.”<sup>185</sup>

Nevertheless, there were a number of instances in which the performance component of the rituals carried out by my informants came under threat. At the *hat aḍiya* ritual which was held at a middle-upper class house in Navala (an inner suburb of Colombo), the host family asked whether the ritual could be carried out with minimum noise. At another instance, Prasantha and Daniel went to carry out a *graha pūjāva* in an apartment complex in Narahenpita (Colombo). Due to sound restrictions they had to carry out the ritual without drumming or dancing. In a number of other occasions, Daniel asked Prasantha to take the *gāṭa beraya* instead of the *yak beraya*, as the sound of the *gāṭa beraya* tends to travel less compared to the *yak beraya*. However, both artists prefer to use the *yak beraya* as the patterns played in these rituals have been developed for the *yak beraya*. Apart from the one instance of the apartment complex, the preference of the ritual hosts to minimize sound can be identified with the need to maintain privacy, mentioned above.

The fact that Low-Country drumming and dance is being compromised in the *devol maḍuva*, the event of a Kalu Kumāra *samayama* is extremely rare, and the performance elements of the *bali* ritual are being threatened, make the future of Low-Country drumming uncertain in the context of the ritual. In addition, the music of the ritual is generally not performed in any other contemporary performance context, including the concert hall, except as items which are confined to a few minutes (see section 1.7 in Chapter 1). This is not because the music is considered to be too sacred. In fact the exact

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<sup>185</sup> Daniel, Susantha and Prasantha, 21 July 2007.

reason for this is unknown and requires further research. A number of reasons, however, are evident:

- 1) The music of the rituals is too strongly associated with the rituals as well as its ritualistic aspects.
- 2) The music of the rituals is not generally appreciated for its artistic value (evident from the *devol maḍuva* ritual).
- 3) The music of the Low-Country rituals may be not regarded as being worthy of being performed in concert settings. This may be due to its traditional association with the lower castes.

If the music of the Low-Country rituals is to survive and be preserved in a context which would allow it to evolve without being compromised, it has to be brought into the contemporary concert stage, particularly to a context which would present the music of a single ritual comprehensively. This may also open up the possibility of exposing the music internationally. Howard suggests a similar approach to globalize Korean music: “... to develop an audience in a specific country or territory requires touring musicians to move from the commonly proposed pick-‘n’-mix to concerts dedicated to more solid sustained repertoire.”<sup>186</sup>

## **7.4 Collaboration in Baliphonics**

If presenting the repertoire of a Low-Country ritual, solely with Low-Country artists may not be successful, given the above reasons, then a collaborative performance, such as the

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<sup>186</sup> Howard, 351.

one discussed in this chapter, can be more favourable. Such a collaboration can introduce the performance elements of the Low-Country ritual (i.e., drumming, dance and singing) to the concert stage. An illustration of this is the ensemble which resulted from the collaboration project named Baliphonics. The name itself was chosen to promote the performance elements of the Low-Country ritual with a fresh approach. The name was also intended to weaken the performances strong connection with the ritual, so that it can be appreciated for its artistic value. Baliphonics included the author, three performer informants (Prasantha, Susatha and Daniel) and three New Zealand musician colleagues (Misha Marks, Isaac Smith and Reuben Derrick). The project was carried out in Sri Lanka, during the month of April 2009.

My Sri Lankan informants were confident that the completed project was a successful approach for keeping the Low-Country music alive in the future. They reflected on the Baliphonics as being successful, primarily because they felt that the collaboration did not compromise Low-Country drumming and dance in any way. “I have seen many instances where the Low-Country dance has been compromised. However, in this project we have not degraded the Low-Country dance or drumming in any way. It is time that we exposed this music to the world. I am very enthusiastic about doing more performances with this group in order to develop this further. No one can criticize us to say that we are degrading the art forms of Low-Country dance or drumming.”<sup>187</sup> The New Zealand artists were also highly satisfied with the way the collaboration enabled them to create a unique performance of high artistic integrity, without degrading the Low-Country art forms. In

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<sup>187</sup> Susantha Rupathilake, personal interview, 01 May 2009.

the remainder of this chapter, the process of this collaboration project is documented in order to highlight what made it successful.

## **7.5 Background for collaboration**

Having being brought up in Sri Lanka and migrating to New Zealand at a young age, the idea of collaboration has allowed me to maintain my connections with the two countries. Having both insider and outsider views of both cultures, affords me an opportunity to identify, compare and merge my different perspectives of these cultures. Prior to the Baliphonics collaboration, I facilitated several projects which involved the collaboration of various musicians from New Zealand and Sri Lanka. In two instances, in 2002 and 2004, I and a number of New Zealand musicians travelled to Sri Lanka and collaborated with various popular singers and traditional percussionists.<sup>188</sup> In 2005, on two separate occasions, I initiated collaborations between Piyasara Shilpadhipathi, a renowned traditional drummer, and Sunil Edirisinghe, a popular Sri Lankan singer, and a number of New Zealand musicians in New Zealand. These two projects made up the content of one of my honours projects.<sup>189</sup> In January 2009, I brought over three musicians from the Sri Lankan State Music Ensemble to collaborate with two musicians from Wellington, which resulted in a New Zealand-wide tour.<sup>190</sup> I performed with these groups playing harmonium, Western drum set and various percussion instruments including Sri Lankan drums.

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<sup>188</sup> The recordings of these performances can be heard in a compact disc titled 'Serendipity' which is an album produced by a New Zealand ensemble I was part of called Mundi.

<sup>189</sup> Sumuditha Suraweera, "Interaction of Two Musical Cultures: A Study of Two Sri Lankan Artists Working with Christchurch Musicians," Hons Diss. (University of Canterbury, 2005).

<sup>190</sup> This project including several others were funded by Creative NZ: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa.

The idea for the Baliphonics collaboration first came to me in 2008 in New Zealand, during a period away from the field. At this time, I was learning the drumming patterns of the *bali* ritual and improvising in the style of *bali* pattern-B. I had started to play these patterns using my main instrument (the jazz drum set), as it was necessary for me to communicate my understanding of these patterns with my informants through performance. At that stage I did not have the technical ability to play these patterns on the *yak beraya* as such skills require a number of years of extensive drumming on the *yak beraya* itself. Over a period of several months, these patterns made up an increasing proportion of my improvisational vocabulary while I was engaged in musical performance. At this point I had truly begun the process of hybridizing my playing with the techniques and concepts I had absorbed over the study of Low-Country drumming. To agree with Snow, I was starting to see that there was a real possibility of appropriating techniques from Low-Country drumming and integrating them into the contemporary Western musical context.<sup>191</sup>

A catalyst for the Baliphonics project occurred when a Sri Lankan community organization in Wellington, New Zealand, requested me to organize a performance for a musical evening. For this event, I chose to organize a piece based on the Low-Country pattern *sarala pada*-D, which I had studied closely. The performance included two fellow New Zealand musicians (Misha Marks and Isaac Smith) and a Sri Lankan community member (Chalanka Athalage) who had a limited knowledge of Low-Country dance. The performance itself, even though very well received, did not reach the concept's full

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<sup>191</sup> Stephen Snow, "Intercultural Performance: The Balinese-American Model " *Asian Theatre Journal* 3.2 (Autumn, 1986) 205.

potential. More importantly, the experience, suggested to me that there was a strong need for a more carefully considered collaboration to take place, with the ritual musicians in Sri Lanka. Within a few weeks, my enthusiasm for such a project grew, and thus I suggested the idea of this collaboration to Prasanth and his family. I mentioned to Prasanth that I was planning to bring over a number of New Zealand musicians for this project and he was immediately enthusiastic at this suggestion. I received a similar response from Jayantha, when I mentioned the idea to him. Upon request, Jayantha even wrote a letter of support to assist the process of seeking funds, in order to make this collaborative project come to fruition.<sup>192</sup> This initial, positive response encouraged me, as it suggested that both Prasanth and Jayantha were confident of such a collaboration being successful. Even though I initiated the project, both of them, being passionate about their art form, would not have shown this initial interest if they felt that such a collaboration would degrade the music and dance of the Low-Country. To them, my suggestion felt like a natural continuation from the progression of events that occurred during my second fieldwork period. During this time, Jayantha had grown to respect my background and performance experience in jazz and improvising contexts, and I was requested to teach the Western drum set to his son.<sup>193</sup> Prasanth had also showed interest in taking part in a collaborative performance of some sort during this same fieldwork.

During my third fieldwork period, it was decided that the *bali* ritual was most suitable to use as a framework for the collaboration. The *bali* ritual was chosen because it is performed more often than the *tovil*, and it meant that the visiting artists from New

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<sup>192</sup> This was Sandhoris Jayantha's last letter (see Appendix 4).

<sup>193</sup> This is a kind of reciprocal action identified by Shelemay in: Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley, eds., *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) 189.



Zealand would have a higher chance of seeing the performance in its original context. This was going to be essential for the collaboration's success. The *bali* also consists of lesser ritualistic aspects compared to the *tovil*, and it displays the highest spontaneity and use of improvisation. This meant that the performance component of the ritual could easily be appreciated for its artistic value.

## **7.6 Musicians in the project**

The artistic excellence, experience, open mindedness and creativity of Prasantha, Susantha and Daniel were discussed in the Introduction of this thesis. The New Zealand musicians who were involved in the project were Misha Marks, Isaac Smith and Reuben Derrick. I have worked extensively with all three musicians in the past in various settings leading up to this collaboration. All three musicians have a reputation for exploring a vast range of both conventional and unconventional sounds using their instruments, a versatility which is essential in collaborating with a non-Western musical system. Similar to the Low-Country ritual musicians, the New Zealand musicians involved, primarily perform in a marginalized context of contemporary music, identified as 'free' music. The minimal limitations in the performance of free music meant that the New Zealand musicians were not going to constrain the Low-Country musicians in the collaboration, as opposed to musicians of another genre, who might follow more rules in the music making process.

Of the three artists, Misha Marks, born in 1983, has the most experience collaborating with Sri Lankan artists. Previous to this project, he travelled to Sri Lanka on two

occasions, in 2002 and 2004, in order to take part in the collaborations I facilitated. Misha was also involved in the collaborative concerts I organized in 2005, throughout New Zealand. With the experience of these projects, Misha was already familiar with working with Sri Lankan musicians, especially in the rehearsal process where communication was limited. Misha's vast experience of playing with musicians in Spain, Mexico, Vienna, Barcelona and London has provided him the essential skills for working with musicians from other cultures. His jazz, Javanese gamelan, classical, flamenco and free music backgrounds all provided him with a wide range of skills. Especially, his ability to explore the possibilities that the classical guitar offers to its full potential, including preparing the instrument in a variety of ways to produce sounds that are not conventionally heard from the guitar, allows him to use the instrument to fulfil roles within a group not usually occupied by the guitar.

Isaac Smith, being the youngest of the three musicians, already had considerable collaboration experiences leading up to this project. He, too, has previous experience working with Sri Lankans, as he was involved in the project I facilitated in 2009. Isaac has developed considerable skills on the double bass, being a graduate from the New Zealand School of Music Jazz Program. His extensive collaborative work with theatre<sup>194</sup> gave him a special interest in Low-Country dance.

Reuben Derrick (born in 1978) capitalized on his wide range of experiences of collaborating with various international musicians, during the Baliphonics collaboration. Reuben, having completed a Bachelor of Music in Performance from the Conservatorium

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<sup>194</sup> Isaac frequently performs with the New Zealand theatre company Indian Ink.

of Music in Sydney, resided in Australia for several years, from 2001-05, and regularly performed with leading Australian and international musicians.<sup>195</sup> His special interest in music making in the outdoors and creating soundscapes using extended saxophone techniques<sup>196</sup> allowed him to effectively collaborate with the chanting of the Low-Country rituals, which consists of subtle microtonal variations.

## **7.7 The preparation prior to the collaboration**

The initial preparation for the collaboration itself provided an opportunity for the transcriptions of this study to be used in a practical context, rather than purely serving to preserve the drumming patterns. The three New Zealand artists were sent transcriptions of drumming patterns in the *bali* ritual, in order to give them an appreciation for the different musical sections of the ritual. The transcriptions were accompanied by video and audio material as well as written notes to assist the artists' understanding of the rhythmic patterns. This material was considered to be most valuable by the New Zealand musicians at this initial stage. The preparatory process for the Sri Lankan artists mostly involved discussions focused on choosing the music for the programme.

Preparation was carried out with the three New Zealanders on two separate accounts. Immediately after the performance that stimulated this project, Misha and Isaac were introduced to several drumming patterns from the *bali* ritual, over a period of two to three months. Separately, Reuben was introduced to the music in preparation for a performance

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<sup>195</sup> These include Jim Denley, Clayton Thomas and Chris Abrahams, Richard Nunns. He has also performed in festivals in Sydney, Hobart and Melbourne.

<sup>196</sup> His solo album "Peeping behind the bucket" best demonstrates these skills.

I did with Reuben, around a month prior to the Baliphonics collaboration.<sup>197</sup> This performance also included a separate collaboration with a Bharatanatyam dancer, Mark Hamilton.

## 7.8 The collaborative process

The collaborative process occurred over three weeks in April 2009. My initial expectations for the success of the project were minimal. I had learnt from my previous experiences of musical collaborations, that I could not predict the success of the project until the project was well under way. In fact, similar to how musicians felt in Steve Coleman's collaboration with AfroCuba De Matanzas,<sup>198</sup> after the initial week of rehearsals, I felt doubt as to whether the collaboration would work at all. Similarly, Susantha, who was unable to take part in these initial rehearsals as he was unwell, said that "overhearing these rehearsals, I did not think that this would work!"<sup>199</sup> This collaborative process of Baliphonics will be discussed under the following headings: non-musical and social collaboration, establishing mutual respect, the Baliphonics programme, rehearsals and performances. The latter two sections will focus on the musical aspects of the collaboration.

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<sup>197</sup> This was the launch of the New Zealand South Asia Centre at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. March, 2009.

<sup>198</sup> Michael Dessen, "Improvising in a Different Clave: Steve Coleman and AfroCuba De Matanzas," *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*, eds. Ajay Heble and Daniel Fischlin (Wesleyan University Press, 2004) 179.

<sup>199</sup> Susantha Rupathilake, 1 May 2009.

### **7.8.1 Non-musical and social collaboration**

The New Zealand musicians and I attended a *mal baliya* ritual carried out by Daniel, Susatha and Prasantha, a day after everyone had arrived on the island. During this initial first-hand experience of the ritual, the New Zealanders were equally fascinated with both the musical and non-musical aspects of the ritual. The altars, incense, offerings of fire and the hospitality of the ritual hosts, collectively gave the New Zealanders a great sense of enthusiasm to be involved in the project. During this *mal baliya* ritual, my informants introduced the New Zealanders to chewing betel leaves with areca nuts. Over the next few days, the New Zealander's developed an appreciation for betel and this created a connection among the two groups of artists on a social level. Encouraged by the visitors' attentiveness throughout the ritual, they were invited to another *bali* ritual, which was a Bhahirava *pūjāva*. During these initial meetings, the artists found connections on a number of levels. For example, Reuben and Prasantha discovered that they shared something in common, as they have children who are similar in age. Isaac's interest in astrology developed a connection between him and Daniel. Also Isaac's fascination with the dance resulted in him receiving casual lessons from Susantha. Misha developed an interest in demonology.

### **7.8.2 Establishing mutual respect**

The New Zealanders had developed a high level of respect for my informants after the initial ritual experiences. Similarly, two separate performances enabled the Sri Lankan artists to develop a sense of musical respect for the New Zealanders. The first instance was when we visited Jayantha's residence. Jayantha's son was rehearsing with his band

which used Western instruments and the New Zealanders played an impromptu set upon request. Prasatha who witnessed this, expressed his appreciation of the New Zealander's skills. The second instance was when the New Zealanders appeared as guest artists at '*bera gī mihira*' concert organized by Prasantha. This performance was witnessed by all three Sri Lankan artists. Susantha after witnessing this performance said that it gave him more confidence that the collaboration could work.

These initial events which enabled both groups of artists to witness performances of each other contributed towards establishing a mutual respect for each others' artistic capabilities. A parallel to these exchanges of performances is seen in Coleman-AfroCuba collaboration, where during the early stages of the collaboration, each group exchanged performances by playing something for each other.<sup>200</sup>

### **7.8.3 The Baliphonics programme**

The Baliphonics programme was aimed to be roughly 70 minutes in length. This was a conscious effort to develop a performance which would be suitable for international festival programmes. Arranging the programme was primarily my task, however I relied on the input of all the artists involved and made a number of alterations throughout the rehearsal process. The final version, outlined below, which is designed to be performed without any breaks, lists each musical segment with brief descriptions of the performers' involvement.

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<sup>200</sup> Dessen, 179.

Item	Performers	Description
<i>Magul bera</i>	Prasantha and author	All three movements of the <i>magul bera</i> are played by both performers in unison.
Verses in salutation to the Three Refuges	Initially Prasantha, Susantha and Daniel. The remaining musicians join in at their discretion.	Four verses are chanted. The hand-held bells are played in the third and fourth verses. New Zealanders and author create soundscapes to accompany the recitations.
<i>Bali</i> pattern-A	All performers	Misha and Isaac play with the pattern. Reuben improvises phrases in response to the chanting.
Transition pattern-A	Prasantha, Susantha and Daniel	This is performed as it is done in the ritual. Reuben changes instrument from soprano to tenor saxophone.
<i>Bali</i> pattern-B	All performers	The New Zealander's join in after the first verse. They state the rhythmic pattern of the last beat.
<i>Bali</i> pattern-E	All performers	The performance gradually intensifies during this section. The section starts with variations of the <i>Bali</i> pattern-E, building from the previous section.
Transition pattern-B	Prasantha, Susantha, Daniel and author	The performance reaches a peak during this section. This transition is performed more elaborately compared to the first.
Musical improvisation	Misha, Reuben, Isaac and author	This section is a free improvisatory section, featuring the New Zealanders. It provides a rest for the dancers. It contrasts with the previous sections where the rhythmic patterns were a strong feature.

<i>Bali</i> pattern-B	All performers	The previous section is merged with this pattern which is introduced for the second time. Here, the New Zealanders play from the beginning and develop what they played during the improvised section.
<i>Bali</i> pattern-C	All performers	This new pattern is introduced without a transition and is cued by the voice.
<i>Iraṭṭiya</i> of <i>bali</i> pattern-C	All performers	The New Zealanders play on certain beats of this pattern, emphasizing the foreshortening structure.
<i>Bali</i> pattern-D	All performers	Featuring the Up-Country influence, this section releases the tension built up until this point with a wider ranged melody and more major tonality.
Transition pattern-C	All performers	New Zealanders improvise over its first portion as the beat is regular. The final section of the pattern excludes the New Zealanders in order to feature the dance and the Sri Lankans.
Verses of planetary deities ( <i>graha kavi</i> )	All performers	The section gradually builds, starting from a pattern in 5 beats, 6 beats then 7 beats. Susantha and Daniel perform with lit-torches, similar to the ritual. As the patterns consist of regular beats, the New Zealanders are able to use their jazz vocabulary to improvise counter-phrases.
Short recital of a <i>sanna</i> in order to conclude the	Daniel and Susantha	This section is a low point of the performance which is



performance		intended to exaggerate the next section, the climax. Vocals only.
Warding off malevolent spirits	All performers	The performance reaches its climax in this section. The dancers ignite flames in the air and the New Zealanders increase the intensity of the performance by improvising freely.
<i>Pūjā bera</i>	Prasantha and author	The piece is played in unison by both performers

**Table 7: Musical segments of Baliphonics programme**

The arrangement of the programme considered several aspects of musical collaboration:

- 1) Collaboration between the original ritual structure and musical aspects.
- 2) Balance of performance between the New Zealanders and Sri Lankans.
- 3) Balance between singing, dance, drumming and instrumental sections.
- 4) Balance between improvised and fixed sections of the programme.

The Baliphonics programme, to a large extent, was based on the original ritual structure. The beginning and the end of the programme followed the solo drumming patterns (*magul bera* and *pūjā bera*) of the original ritual structure, as these effectively framed the performance. The performance of these patterns with both the drummers (Prasantha and me) also intended to gain the attention of the audience. The sections containing ritualistic aspects were left out from the Baliphonics programme, and the focus was placed in shaping the performance by using the different musical sections of the ritual. The balance between the two groups of performers was created by including sections that featured one of the two groups by themselves. The section featuring the New Zealanders (musical improvisation) was arranged after the section of extensive dance by the Sri Lankans

(transition pattern-B). In addition to creating the balance between the performers, this helped maintain continuity of the programme, as the dancers generally require a break after a section of extensive dance. As the Sri Lankans are featured more often in the programme, the duration of the musical improvisation was extended during the live performances to create some balance between the performers. The sections of the programme also created a balance between the different performance elements of dance, drumming, singing and instrumental. Unaccompanied recitations were used at low points of the performance. The whole ensemble, with the added visual component of fire, created the climax. The structure of the programme was fixed, however, there was extensive space to improvise within this structure. The lengths of each section varied between different run-throughs of the programme, as the changes were cued. This ensured that the spontaneity of the original ritual performance was uncompromised.

#### **7.8.4 Rehearsals**

Communication among the performers during the rehearsals was kept to a minimum, partly due to the linguistic barrier. I fulfilled the role of a translator when it was required. Generally, the artists enjoyed communicating through their instruments more. The rehearsals occurred during most days of the first three weeks and these sessions were recorded on a regular basis. The Sri Lankans were fascinated to see how Misha prepared his guitar using clothes pegs and blue-tack, similar to how the New Zealanders were initially fascinated with the ritual performances. The rehearsal process of the Baliphonics collaboration, with reference to group learning, challenges faced by the artists and the

general approaches of musicians follows, and is intended to illustrate, how the collaboration occurred on a musical level.

In the first few sessions, the rehearsals consisted of moving back and forth between playing different patterns in isolation (i.e., *bali* patterns A-E). The Sri Lankans were patient and pleased to repeat the patterns many times, until the New Zealanders were able to familiarize themselves with the timing. Most attention was paid to *bali* pattern-B as it was the most challenging for the New Zealanders, due to its polyrhythmic nature. The New Zealanders particularly had trouble feeling the beat, during sections where Prasantha improvised. Isaac commented on how he heard these improvisatory sections: “I can only hear Prasantha whacking the drums hard!” In this instance, I was able to assist the New Zealanders understand the improvisatory sections by acting as a bridge. In a number of focused sessions between myself and the New Zealanders, I improvised in the style of Prasantha, until the New Zealanders understood what Prasantha was playing. Another important form of group learning occurred in the process of listening back to the rehearsals, which were recorded regularly. This was most useful in reflecting on the progress of the project as it was carried out.

The New Zealanders were faced with the challenge of familiarizing themselves with the transitional patterns. The transitional patterns-A and B featured irregular timing, that unique feature of the Low-Country drumming patterns. If the New Zealanders were to contribute to these sections effectively, the patterns had to be thoroughly understood and internalized. In contrast, if these transitional patterns were arranged to be performed

strictly the same, each time, this would have helped the New Zealanders. However, this would have undoubtedly compromised the Low-Country dance and drumming. Even though initially the New Zealanders attempted to learn these patterns, it proved too difficult to be internalized within a short period. Therefore, these two transitional patterns were used as an opportunity to features the Sri Lankan performers without the input of the New Zealanders. Similarly, Steve Lacy, an influential American saxophonist, acknowledges the challenges of internalizing unfamiliar systems of music when engaging in collaborations with musicians from other cultures. “Sometimes it’s impossible. Because in most cases like that [i.e., working with musicians from different cultures], they play what they play. They’re not going to suddenly learn ... And I can’t do that, it would take me years and years to get that music in my blood. So we’re doing different things at the same time in the same place. It’s a question of really just finding some fragile thread, just to get the connection to it.”<sup>201</sup>

The New Zealanders also had to learn to play with the vocal recitations which were not sung consistently, as the tessitura of the singing varied according to the energy levels of the Sri Lankans. This, too, was an essential quality of the music. Daniel stated that “generally, we strive to sing above the pitches produced by the drumming.”<sup>202</sup> One of several methods the New Zealanders experimented with, in order to overcome this challenge, was tuning the double bass and the guitar to a number of different tones produced by the *yak beraya*. However, due to the unpredictability of this process, it was

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<sup>201</sup> Jason Weiss, ed., *Steve Lacy: Conversations* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006) 99.

<sup>202</sup> Daniel Rupathilake, 15 Apr 2009.

decided that the musicians were best to confront this issue by determining the pitch of the chanting during each performance, and adjust the tuning on the instruments as required.

For the Sri Lankans, especially Daniel, being the oldest artist, a challenge was getting used to the structure of the new Baliphonics programme. The ritual has become an intuitive performance for Daniel and he is usually accompanied by musicians who are capable of closely following him during the performance. Thus, initially, he found it difficult to perform only the sections chosen for the Baliphonics programme in their new arrangement. However, Daniel overcame this challenge with the repetition of the Baliphonics programme at rehearsals.

The individual approaches of the New Zealand artists varied. All being experienced in free improvising, with high musical maturity, they were well capable of finding their roles in new musical environments. The techniques they brought into the music were highly personal and had been developed through their own music for a considerable period. Most importantly, their attitude was not to impose a stylistic genre on the Low-Country drumming or dance, rather complementing the expressive nature of these art forms. Considering my individual approach, I was not playing or mapping the syllables of Low-Country drumming patterns strictly or systematically on to the drum set.<sup>203</sup> Rather, I had internalized the patterns and developed a method of playing the patterns on the drums so that they were recognizable to the Sri Lankans. This was proven in the process as the Sri Lankans were happy to dance being accompanied solely by the drum set. My understanding of the two different musical languages of the performers in the

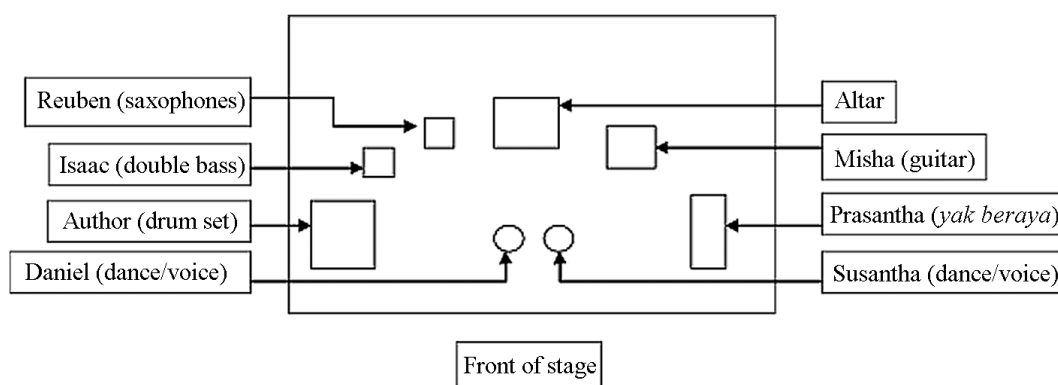
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<sup>203</sup> Influenced by my lessons and conversations with the Australian drummer Simon Barker.

ensemble, allowed me to take part in sections that featured one of the groups of performers. In addition, I was able to spontaneously choose the style of improvisation within the different sections of the Baliphonics programme.

## **7.9 Performances**

The rehearsals which were regularly carried out during the first three weeks of the Baliphonics collaboration, concluded with two performances. The first performance was made on 22 April 2009 at the John De Silva Theatre in Colombo, specifically for the purpose of creating a video recording of the Baliphonics programme. Therefore, this performance did not consist of an audience. The stage was decorated using altars similar to rituals and these were created by Prasantha at the theatre, around two hours prior to the performance. The Sri Lankan performers were dressed in the traditional ritual costumes. I and the New Zealanders were dressed in plain black costumes, in order highlight the traditional costumes. During this performance, we took a number of breaks and repeated some sections with which we were dissatisfied. This performance also acted as rehearsal for the second performance which did involve an audience. The following stage setup was used in both the performances.



**Figure 148: Stage setup of Baliphonics**

The second performance was on 25 April 2009 at the Barefoot Gallery, in Bambalapitiya, Colombo, which is a venue which caters for tourists and the higher socio-economic sector of Colombo (a video of this concert is included in Appendix 9). The evening also included a performance of a popular local rock fusion band known as Triloka, which consisted of members aged 18-25. For this performance, I organized Jayantha's son to build an altar, as Prasantha had prior commitments during the day of the performance. As the building of the altar at the venue was inconvenient I transported the altar to the venue from Jayantha's residence. During the performance, Daniel unintentionally changed the order of some of the segments. However, the preparation during the rehearsals and the previous performance meant that the New Zealanders were able to follow Daniel without hesitation. Each artist received a payment of 8000 rupees each for this performance. The members of audience for the evening were mostly of young and middle ages. The responses of the performance were by and large positive. One audience member said that he did not expect the performance to be of such a high artistic integrity. Several members of Triloka who performed after the Baliphonics said that they could not concentrate during their performance, as they were overwhelmed and thrilled by the Baliphonics.

Another audience member said that the Baliphonics should aim to perform internationally. Perhaps the most open feedback was given to me by an audience member, when we were engaged in a causal conversation after the concert. When inquiring about what the band members were paid for the performance, the person asked with surprise “did the ritual musicians get paid that much?” This comment reveals the existing marginalisation of Low-Country ritual musicians in contemporary society.

## 7.10 Chapter summary

Several factors contributed towards the success of the Baliphonics collaboration:

1. Not compromising the Low-Country drumming, dance or singing in the process.
2. Minimal expectation of the outcome of the project.
3. The social and non-musical aspects of collaboration.
4. Effective group learning.
5. Artists experience, excellence and commitment.

If viewed purely as a contemporary performance which incorporates traditional Low-Country ritual music, the project could be criticized in a similar way to modern Korean music, illustrated by Hwang’s comments: “The utilization of *kugak* in modern composition poses the danger of political incorrectness, of accusation of ‘playing [one’s] ethnic trump card’ (Serra Hwang 2003), or ‘promoting exoticism or otherness to secure grants or performance’ (Na 2003).”<sup>204</sup> However, as I have argued in the earlier part of

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<sup>204</sup> Chan E. Park, "Poetics and Politics of Korean Oral Tradition in a Cross-Cultural Context," *The World of music* 45.3 (2003) 93.



this chapter, it is critical that the performance elements of the Low-Country ritual is brought fourth onto the concert stage, and exposed internationally, if Low-Country drumming is to survive. The Baliphonics collaboration successfully avoided the greatest risk which could occur in the process, which is to compromise the art of Low-Country drumming. In addition to the exposure, if I had not taken the initiative to set up this collaboration, the performance aspects of the *bali* ritual, which demonstrate the Low-Country disciplines to the highest standard, would remain by and large hidden and unappreciated, providing little incentive for the younger musicians to pursue and master these art forms to the highest level. The inclusion of the New Zealand musicians, especially helped legitimize the performance aspects of the Low-Country ritual among the locals. The New Zealanders commitment also strengthened the Sri Lankans level of confidence to perform the ritual music as a specific repertoire on the concert stage. Placing the Low-Country musicians on equal grounds with Western musicians, would also have the long term effect of raising their economic and social standards. I believe that the Baliphonics performance reflects the music of the *bali* ritual in its totality, in a contemporary setting and “. . . is, in essence, that of the fashionable preservation movement, or of those who espouse ‘historically informed performances’ or the maintenance of tradition.”<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Howard, 354.

## Conclusion

This study provides the first detailed documentation of the drumming of three Low-Country rituals: *graha pūjāva*, Kalu Kumāra *samayama* and *devol maḍuva* belonging to the three respective categories of *bali*, *tovil* and *maḍu* rituals. Examining the musical structures of the rituals has revealed the extensive repertoire of Low-Country drumming patterns. The most common drumming patterns are the short repetitive patterns (*sarala pada*) which accompany singing and simple dance. The second most common are the introductory patterns (*ārambhaka pada*) which are played at the beginning of any segment of dance. Many other patterns accompany different acts of the ritual, such as, salutations, blessings, cleansing, and making offerings. Others are specifically associated with dancers' moves i.e., patterns where dancers go around in circles and decorative patterns where torches are waved. There are also longer patterns which are associated with specific segments of the *devol maḍuva*. Two other longer patterns *magul bera* and *pūjā bera* are the only solo drumming patterns of the Low-Country tradition. All these different pattern types in the Low-Country drumming repertoire contain characteristics that are unique to themselves. The longer patterns are often more complex and are made up of different sections. Artists recognize these longer patterns to be of the highest artistic value. The analysis of the drumming patterns identified three structural features of the patterns: extension, repetition and foreshortening. These features are common to most drumming patterns in the Low-Country. Even though these are not explicitly recognized in the tradition, experienced artists acknowledge how the identification of these features helps them memorize the drumming patterns. The lack of appreciation for these structures risk the patterns being lost, altered and disordered. Transcriptions of the

patterns and descriptions of drumming techniques also makes these more accessible for people interested in learning Low-Country drumming.

A study of the main instrument of the tradition, the *yak beraya*, focuses on its construction process and the relationship between the instrument and musician. The *yak beraya* is a double-headed, laced, cylindrical-shaped membranophone, played with both the hands and strapped around the player's waist. The body of the drum is made using wood from trees with hard cores and the drumheads are covered with cow intestines. Little has changed in the current construction of the instrument compared to traditional instrument making methods. Currently, electric tools are confined to the making of the body of the drum, while the other steps in the making of the drum are still done by hand. The traditional instrument making practices involve certain rituals and these give the instrument a sacred quality. Even though these rituals are currently abandoned, it was found that drummers still have a deep respect for their instruments.

From an in-depth understanding of the Low-Country drumming, it was revealed that there are a number of aspects that make it highly expressive in nature. These aspects can be categorized as follows:

1. Timing
  - a) Pulse, *akşara* and dance
  - b) Beat, accent and dance
  - c) Tempo and dance
2. Embellishment and Improvisation

- a) Degrees of embellishment
  - b) Individuality in improvisation
- 3. Dynamics
  - a) Range and level of dynamics
  - b) Dynamics of embellishment and improvisation cued by dance
- 4. Pitch
  - a) Pitch of *akşara*
  - b) Pitch of singing and relation to drumming
- 5. Performance
  - a) Relaxation
  - b) Rudimentary exercises

The first feature of Low-Country drumming is its timing, which is unique and different from Western, Jazz and other Sri Lankan traditions. The most significant aspect of timing that gives it its character is the pulse. Low-Country drummers feel the pulse in terms of *akşara* (drum syllables) rather than feeling the pulse in terms of the smallest, regular, units of time. The term ‘pulse’, therefore, in Low-Country drumming, can be used interchangeably with ‘*akşara*’. The pulse is irregular and is often random and illusive. The irregularity of the pulse is what most accounts for the rhythmic nuances. How drummers feel this irregular pulse most significantly explains the unique way in which Low-Country drummers feel time. *Akşara* are vocalized syllables and represent the smallest rhythmical unit. There are four basic *akşara* known as *tat*, *dit*, *toṃ* and *naṃ*. These also refer to four basic drum strokes. In addition to the four basic *akşara*, there are

many other *akṣara* that make up the drumming patterns of the tradition. *Akṣara* must be interpreted in the context of the drumming pattern and it generally refers to a combination of duration, stroke and timbre. The duration of different *akṣara* varies. Even the duration of the same *akṣara* may vary subtly, depending on the stroke and timbre. It is this variation that makes the pulse in Low-Country drumming irregular.

Dance in the Low-Country tradition influences most aspects of the drumming. This is because a large proportion of the drumming repertoire accompanies dance. In addition, both the drummers and dancers work from the same repertoire of patterns. The connection of dance to the irregular nature of drumming *akṣara* is most apparent in the short, repetitive, drumming patterns with regular beats. The dance of one of the most characteristic short patterns in the tradition, known as the *gaman tālaya* (walking metre), consists of a jagged movement, and it is in this visual movement that the irregularity of the drumming *akṣara* can be seen very clearly.

In addition to the irregular pulse, the beat is often illusive and irregular. The illusive nature of the beat is most apparent in patterns that consist of a string of short *akṣara* sequences. The beat is also extremely illusive in a particular pattern of the *bali* ritual i.e., *bali* pattern-B. This is both due to its embellishments that use varying subdivisions of the beat and the polyrhythmic nature of the performance as a whole. Other features of drumming that make the beat illusive include the playing of technical phrases in patterns in a rushed manner and the variation in duration of rolls within repetitive drumming and longer patterns. The irregular beat is most apparent in the longer drumming patterns,

which are played at a slow tempo, identified as *bara*. Experienced artists consider patterns played at the *bara* tempo to be the most expressive. This is because during these patterns, the dancer is allowed to dictate the timing of the drumming, without giving concern to keep a regular beat. At certain points within these patterns, the dancer is allowed to show expression using body movements. Patterns at *bara* reveal the most extensive connection between the drummer and the dancer, as both the drummer and the dancer perform in unison. In these patterns, drummers extensively use accents in order to emphasize the stronger beats. Silences are often filled by drummers using lighter strokes known as *kannilam*. The lighter strokes, when played by a group of drummers, often sound random and cluttered due to the heterophonic nature of the playing. However, they too contribute towards the overall expressive nature of the drumming. Patterns with regular beats usually accompany vocal recitations. Some of these consist of odd groupings of beats such as five and seven. As Low-Country drummers learn and refer to the patterns in terms of their *akṣara*, they are often unconcerned about the odd beat numbers. This also allows them to freely alternate between patterns with different beats.

Three tempos are recognized in the tradition as *bara*, *haramba* and *kaḍinam*. These three terms respectively refer to slow, medium and fast tempos. In addition, the terms are also associated with different qualities in performance. *Bara* is considered to be most expressive. *Haramba* meaning both ‘exercises’ and ‘medium’ is therefore the most commonly used tempo. The *kaḍinam* tempo sometimes sees the dancer appearing to be in a state of trance. The subtle acceleration and deceleration of tempo is most commonly used in short repetitive patterns played at the *kaḍinam* tempo. Drummers use this feature

to effectively control the intensity of the performance. A larger range of acceleration is used in repetitive dance patterns. At times, the acceleration during these patterns is so significant that the beat of the pattern undergoes a change during the latter repetitions of a pattern. Another two drumming patterns that heavily feature the use of acceleration and deceleration are the two solo drumming patterns *magul bera* and *pūjā bera*.

The next most important features of drumming that contribute towards its expressive nature are embellishment and improvisation. Embellishment is recognized by the artists as *alankāra*, and this is far more common compared to improvisation. The level of embellishment can be categorized into three degrees in terms of spontaneity: variation, set-embellishment and free-embellishment. These first two degrees i.e., variation and set-embellishment are taught as pre-determined patterns. Variations refer to the different ways in which the short repetitive patterns may be played. Set-embellishments are also associated with short repetitive patterns. However, during these, dancers perform more steps, whereas they generally dance on the spot during recitations accompanied by repetitive drumming patterns. The third degree of embellishment, labelled as free-embellishment, involves more spontaneity. However, the drummers still closely follow a basic pattern in order to accompany the dancer. Of the three rituals studied, the drumming of the *devol maḍuva* is limited to these varying degrees of embellishment. The other two rituals feature improvisation in addition to embellishment. Embellishment in the drumming of the *bali* ritual is unique to the *bali* as it features the extensive use of advanced techniques. There are no set rules of how advanced techniques are used. Therefore, drummers usually develop their own individual styles when using advanced

techniques. Improvisation in drumming is most extensively practised in the *bali* ritual. Drummers recognize improvisatory playing to occur ‘in a continuous flowing string’ or *vālaṭa galāgena enava*. Unlike embellishment, improvisation is neither taught nor discussed as a concept. It is practised only by the most experienced drummers. A large proportion of the rhythmic vocabulary of improvisatory segments is common among different drummers. However, a small proportion of the drummers’ improvisatory vocabulary is unique to each individual and provides the different drummers with subtle individual characteristics.

The third characteristic of the drumming that contributes towards its expressive nature is dynamics. Drumming in the *devol maḍuva* ritual is consistently loud. The outdoor nature of this ritual requires the drumming to be loud, if it is to be heard, and its presence felt. The dynamics of the drumming in the *tovil* ritual are also mostly loud. Unlike the *devol maḍuva*, the *tovil* studied in this thesis is always held indoors and, consequently, the sound of the drumming is much more intense and powerful. This sound effectively conveys the power of the demons of the ritual. The largest range of dynamics is used in the drumming of the *bali* ritual. The soothing nature of the ritual has allowed for the quiet, subtle sounds of the drum to be featured. However, the performance is still shaped and kept alive with the extensive use of dynamics. The embellishments and improvisations in the *bali* ritual, cued by the dancer, are significantly louder than the segments that focus on the singing.



The fourth characteristic of the drumming, pitch, is a subtle aspect. It is revealed in the tuning of the instrument itself. Although the *yak beraya* is not tuned to specific pitches, different drumming *akşara* generally represent high and low sounds. Most short repetitive patterns consist of a balance of high and low *akşara*. The *akşara* with lower pitches are often used at the start of patterns as they resonate more and provide a strong start to the cycle. The *dom akşara*, which consists of both low and high sounds produced in unison, is featured in the most intense drumming. There is no strict tonal relationship between the singing and the drumming of the Low-Country but the tessitura of the singing varies according to the energy levels of the performers. Generally, the performers strive to sing above the pitches produced by the drumming. Sometimes in *bali* rituals, the singing naturally settles on similar pitches to the overtones produced by the drumming. Even though there is no strict relationship between the pitch of singing and the drumming, the metrical component of recitations, in both repetitive and longer patterns, closely follows the drumming.

The fifth and final factors that contribute towards the drumming's expressive nature are two aspects of performance: relaxation and rudimentary exercises. Experienced artists believe that being completely relaxed in the upper body is imperative to communicate through the drumming and play with expression. The development of physical skills and techniques is also considered to be essential in order to perform expressively. The most common approach to develop these necessarily skills is to practise a set of rudimentary exercises identified as *haramba*.

This study revealed a number of hidden aspects of the Low-Country tradition. Of aspects already mentioned, the feeling of the pulse in terms of *akṣara*, compositional features of patterns and relaxation are generally hidden from the artists themselves. Another aspect hidden from the artists is the embedded pattern in seven in slower patterns. The main reason why these aspects are hidden from the artists is because of the artists' intuitive knowledge. Being part of an oral tradition, Low-Country drummers have not felt the need to openly define or theorize their drumming even to novice drummers. A major aspect that remains hidden is the relationship between *akṣara* and the techniques used to produce *akṣara*. The limited number of techniques used to produce the different *akṣara* means that a number of different *akṣara* can be produced by the same stroke. Also particular *akṣara* themselves can be produced using different strokes. This complex relationship between technique and *akṣara* was discussed in this thesis through a concept proposed as '*akṣara*-cells'. Many aspects of Low-Country drumming already discussed in this conclusion remain hidden from the audience, the most significant being the musical structure of the rituals, the structures of the drumming patterns and the structures of *akṣara* cells.

Below the surface of the expressive drumming, the patterns performed in the ritual are structured through the use of various cues. It is the dancers who most often cue the drummers. Dancers use certain *akṣara* consistently the same way and these act as signposts to keep the drummer and dancer together, particularly in the performance of slower patterns. The same *akṣara* are used as cues when performing lengthy segments of repetitive patterns and in transitions between different patterns in the *bali* ritual. Aside

from dance cues, performers in the *bali* use vocal cues, such as changing the phrasing of the singing, in order to maintain the musical structure of the performance. The wide range of cues used in the *bali* ritual demands that all the performers involved have a thorough intuitive knowledge of drumming, dance and singing. It is such hidden aspects that have contributed towards a lack of appreciation of Low-Country drumming.

Through fieldwork, I have established close relationships with my informants to an extent that they feel comfortable enough to allow me to take initiatives to preserve and ensure the survival of Low-Country ritual drumming, overseas and in Sri Lanka itself. Prasantha said “You have dedicated several years to study our art form in depth. This means that you can expose this music to international audiences without degrading it. Most importantly, we are now friends and we are certain of your sincerity. We have been treated unfairly many times during our overseas tours in the past. This is because we do not have the necessary skills to organize performances overseas ourselves. The people who have taken us in the past have had their own agendas.”<sup>206</sup> Currently Low-Country ritual drumming is not comprehensively performed outside of the ritual contexts. In addition, the contemporary ritual is undergoing several changes from its traditional form. Firstly, smaller versions of spiritual practices, which are recognized as translations of the traditional ritual forms, are becoming popular. However, these rituals have excluded the performance elements of drumming and dance. In the period of this study, I have noted a number of occasions where my informants had to omit the performance aspects of the ritual. Secondly, even though the performance elements are still present in the public rituals, these rituals are being adapted to contemporary society with a focus on

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<sup>206</sup> Prasantha Rupathilake, 1 May 2009.

entertainment. This has meant that the patterns which are considered to be of high, artistic value are becoming excluded from the repertoire of the public rituals. As a result of this, the public ritual does not serve as an effective, inspiring, training ground for younger artists. Because of these changes in the ritual, the future of Low-Country drumming is uncertain in the context of the ritual. In order to ensure the survival of Low-Country ritual drumming, it needs to be brought into a different, contemporary, performance context, out of the ritual, such as the concert stage. I have documented a collaborative performance, in which, the drumming was brought into such a performance context. After only the initial collaboration and performances, my informants are confident that this is one approach which would allow the Low-Country drumming, along with its other performance elements, to remain alive without being degraded or compromised. In this light, the future of Low-Country drumming remains positive.

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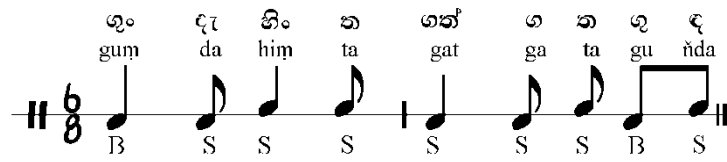
## **Appendix 1: Transcriptions of Drumming Patterns**

*Sarala pada-A*

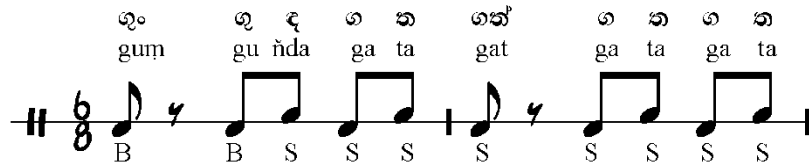
268



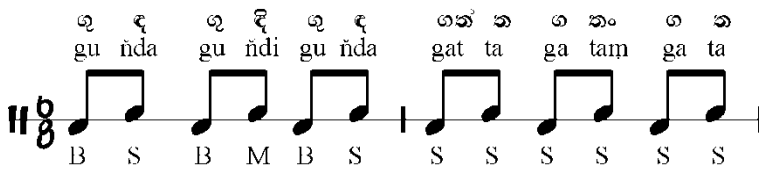
### Variation 2 (*sarala pada-B2*)



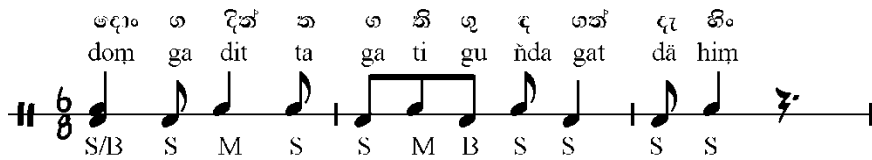
### Variation 3 (*sarala pada-B3*)



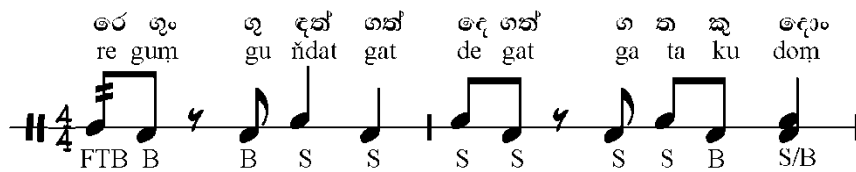
### Variation 4 (*sarala pada-B4*)



### Ending (*hamāre*)



### *Sarala pada-C*



## Variations

### Variation 1

dom ga tat gat dā him ga tat gu ṇḍa

S/B S S S S S S B S

### Variation 2

re gum gu ṇḍat gat de gat ga ta ku gu ṇḍa

FTB B B S S S S S S B B S

### Variation 3

gum gu ṇḍat gat tam ga ta ku gu ṇḍa

B B S S S S S S B B S

### Variation 4

gat ta ga dit gu ṇḍa gum ṇḍa gum dit gu ṇḍa

S S S M B S B S B M B S

## Ending (*hamāre*)

dom ta ku dom ga ta ga di ta ka di gu ṇḍa ka dom

S/B S B S/B S S S M S S M B S S S/B

## Sarala pada-D

gum gum ṇḍam gat ga ta gat ga tam gat ga ta

B B S S S S S S S S S S S

## Set-embellishment

ගුං රිං ගත් දැහිං ගා තා ගා තා ගා තා ගා දි තා ගා තා කා  
gum rim gat dāhiṃ ga ta ga ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta ka

B F#TB S S S S S S S S S S S S S M S S S S S

දොං ගා තා ගු ṇ්දා ගු ṇ්දා ගා තා ගා දිත් තා ගා තා ගා දි තා ගා තා කා  
dom ga ta gu ṇḍa gum gu ṇḍa ga ta ga diṭ ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta ka

S/B S S B S B B S S S S S S S M S S S S S M S S S S S

## Ending (*hamāre*)

දොං කා ගු ගු ṇ්දා ගු ṇ්දි තා ගු ගු ṇ්දා ගු ṇ්දිත් තා ගා තා ගත් දි රි කි ො ගා තා කා දැහිං  
dom ta gu gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta gu gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍiṭ ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhiṃ

S/B S B B S B M S B B S B M S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S S

## Sarala pada-E

### Yāḍini mātraya (sarala pada-E1)

ගුං ගු ṇ්දා ගත් ති තා ගා තා  
gum gu ṇḍa gat ti ta ga ta

B B S S M S S S

### Keṭi yāḍini mātraya (sarala pada-E2)

දොං කා ගා තා ගත් කා ගුං  
dom ta ga ta gat ta gum

S/B S S S S S B

## Sarala pada-F

දොං ගුං ṇ්දත් දැ දා හිං ගුං  
dom gum ṇḍat dā dā hiṃ gum

S/B B S S S B

## Ending (*hamāre*)

dom̐ gu ṇḁa ga ta gu ṇḁit ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ka dom̐  
 S/B B S S S B M S S S S M S S S S S/B



### *Paṇḍam pada-C*

රිං න ග දි න ග දි ග න ගු ද ගුං දැහිං ගුං දැහිං ග නි ග න ගු ද  
 rim ta ga di ta ga di ga ta guṇḍa guṇḍa dāhiṃ guṇḍa dāhiṃ ga ti ga ta gu ṇḍa

රිං න ග දි න ග නි ගු ද ගත් ග නි න ග නි න ග නි ගු ද ගත්  
 rim ta ga di ta ga ti gu ṇḍa gat ga ti ta ga ti ta ga ti gu ṇḍa gat

ගුං ද ගු දං ග නි ග නං න ගත් නත් දැහිං ගත් දි රි කි තා ගා තා කා දැහිං  
 guṇḍa guṇḍaṃ ga ti ga taṃ ta gat tat dāhiṃ gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhiṃ

FTB S S M S S M S S B S B S S B S S S M S S B S  
 FTB S S M S S M B S S S M S S M S S M B S S  
 B S B S S M S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S

### *Paṇḍam pada-D*

රිං ග න ග දි ග න ග දි ග න ගු ද ගත් ග දි ග න ග දි ග න ග දි ග න ගු ද ගත් රිං ග න ගු ද ගත් ග දි ග න ගු ද ගත්  
 rim gata ga di ga ta ga di ga ta guṇḍa gat ga di ga ta ga di gata ga di ga ta guṇḍa gat rim gata guṇḍa gat ga di ga ta guṇḍa gat

රිං ග න ග දි ග න ග දි ග න ගු ද ගත් ගත් තා ගුං ද ගු ද ගත් තත් දැහිං  
 rim ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa gat ta guṇḍa gat tat dāhiṃ

FTB S S S M S S S M S S B S S S M S S S M S S S M S S B S S FTB S S S B S S S M S S B S S  
 FTB S S S M S S S S M S S B S S S S B S S S S S S S

## Appendix 1-C: Sets of patterns specifically associated with segments in *devol maḍuva*

### Pattini segment

#### *Karaṇḍu pada-1*

(Repeat until cued. accell.)

gu ṇḍa ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa ga di ga ta dāhiṃ guṃ

guṃ dā hiṃ guṃ dā hiṃ gu ṇḍi ta gu ṇḍaṃ ga ta gat

dā hiṃ gat dā hiṃ ga ti ta ga taṃ ga ta

(Repeat until cued.)

ga ti ta ka de gu ṇḍa ka dā hiṃ

ru ṇḍa ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa gat taṃ guṃ ṇḍat gu hi di ga di ri ki ta

ga ta ga ta ga hi di ga taṃ tat dit tat di ga taṃ doṃ ga dit ta guṇḍa dāhiṃ

## Karañdu pada-2

(Repeat until cued. accel.)

ගුඳ ගා දි ගත ගුඳ ගුඳ ගා දි ගත දාහිම ගුම රුඳ ගා දි ගත ගුඳ ගත  
guṇḍa ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa guṇḍa ga di ga ta dāhim guṁ ruṇḍa ga di ga ta guṇḍa gat

තා ගුම දත් ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ගත ගත ග හි දි ගත  
taṁ guṁ ṇḍat gu hi di ga di ri ki ṭa ga ta ga ta ga hi di ga taṁ

ගුම දත් ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ගත ගත ග හි දි ගත තත් ග හි දි ගත දිත්  
guṁ ṇḍat gu hi di ga di ri ki ṭa ga ta ga ta ga hi di ga taṁ tat ga hi di ga taṁ diṭ

ග හි දි ගත ග දිත් ත ගුඳ ගා දි ගත ගුඳ ගා දි ත ගුඳි ත  
ga hi di ga taṁ ga diṭ ta gu ṇḍa ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta

තත් තත් ත තත් තා ගුම දත් ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ගත ගත  
tat tat ta tat ta guṁ ṇḍat gu hi di ga di ri ki ṭa ga ta ga ta

ග හි දි ගත තත් දිත් තත් දි ගත ධො ග දිත් ත ගුඳ දාහිම  
ga hi di ga taṁ tat diṭ tat di ga taṁ ḍom ga diṭ ta guṇḍa dā him

B S S M S S B S B S S M S S S S M FTB S S M S S B S S  
S B S B F T S F T S S S S S S S S F T S S S S F T S S M  
S F T S S S M S B S S M S S B S S M S B M S  
S S S S B S B F T S F T S S S S S S S S  
S F T S S S M S M S S S/B S M S B S S S



### *Karañdu pada-3*

**(Repeat until cued. accell.)**

[illegible]

ගත් ගු ඳං ගු ඳං ගත් දැහිං ග ති ග ත ගත් දැහිං රෙ ග ත කු ඳො  
gat gu ṇḍaṃ guṇḍaṃ gat dāhiṃ ga ti ga ta gat dāhiṃ re ga ta ku ḍoṃ

S B S B S B S S S M S S S S S S FTB S S B S/B

රිං ගත් ති ත ගත් ඳො ත ග දි ත ග ත ගුං රු රු ද ග ත ග ති ත ග ත  
riṃ gat ti ta gat ḍoṃ ta ga di ta ga ta guṃ ruṃ ru ṇḍa ga ta ga ti ta ga taṃ

FTB S M S S S/B S S M S S S B FTB FTB S S S S M S S S

ග ත ගත් ති ත ගත් ඳො ත ග ත ගු ද ග ත ගත් දි රි කි ගත් දි රි කි ග ත කු ඳො  
ga ta gat ti ta gat ḍoṃ ta ga ta guṇḍa ga ta gat di ri ki ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ku ḍoṃ

S S S M S S S/B S S S B S S S S F T S S S F T S S S S S B S/B

dom dom dom rim ta de ga ta gu nda dāhīm

ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ka dom tat dom de ga ta ga tam gu gu ndi ta ga ta

gat tat dom ru nda ga ta gunda ga ta gat tat de ga tat dom

S/B S/B S/B FTB S S S S B S S S S S S S S S S S S S S/B

### Mātrā pada-3

de ga tat dom di ri ki ta ga ti ga ta

S S S S/B F T S S S M S S

de ga tat de ga tat dom ta ga di ta ga ta ta ri ta ri ki ta

S S S S S S S/B S S M S S S S S S S F T S

ga ti ta ga tam re ga tat de gu ñda ku dom

S M S S S FTB S S S B S B S/B

### Mātrā pada-4

rim dim ga ta gu gu ñdat dāhim di ri ki ta dom dāhim

FTB S S S S B B S S S F T S S S/B S S

rim ga di ga ta gum ñdat ga di ga ta guñda ga di ga ta ga ti ta ga tam

FTB S M S S B S S M S S B S S M S S S M S S S

rim ga ta ga ta ga ti ta ga tam ru ñda gadi ga ta ga ti ta ga tam ga di ta ga tam

FTB S S S S S M S S S FTB S S M S S S M S S S S M S S S

gu ñdi ta gu ñdam dom ta gat tat gu hi di ga di ri ki ta tat di ga tam

B M S B S S/B S S S B F T S F T S S S M S S

*Mātrā pada-5*

ගත් දිත් තත් ගුං දිත් තත් ගුං දිත් තත් දැහිං දි රි කි ට  
gat dit tat gum ñdit tat gum ñdit tat dāhiṃ di ri ki ta  
S M S B M S B M S S S F T S S

ගත් දිත් තත් ගත් දිත් තත් ගත් දිත් තත් දොං දොං දොං ගුං දිත් තත් ගුං දිත් තත් ගුං දිත් තත්  
gat dit tat gat dit tat gat dit tat dom dom dom gum dit tat gum dit tat gum dit tat  
S M S S M S S M S S/B S/B S/B B M S B M S B M S

දොං දොං දොං ගත් දිත් තත් දොං දොං ගුං දිත් තත් දොං දොං  
dom dom dom gat dit tat dom dom gum dit tat dom dom  
S/B S/B S/B S M S S/B S/B B M S S/B S/B

ගත් දිත් තත් ගුං දිත් තත් රු දා ගු දා ග තා දැහිං  
gat dit tat gum dit tat ru ñda gu ñda ga ta dāhiṃ  
S M S B M S FTB S B S S S S S S

### Pattini *pada*-1

[illegible]

(Note: drummer plays filler strokes at marked points)

## Pattini pada-1 (surala)

ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ග න ග න ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි ටෙ කි ට ගති න ග න කු දොං  
 gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ග න ග න ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි ටෙ කි ට ගති න ග න කු දොං  
 gum di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ග න ග න ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි ටෙ කි ට ගති න ග න කු දොං  
 gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ග න ග න ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ගුං දි ටෙ කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි ටෙ කි ට ගති න ග න කු දොං  
 gum di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta gum di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom

ග දි න කු දොං ගු දි න කු දොං දොං නත් දොං න ග දි නත් ගත් දි ටෙ කි ට ග න ග න නත් දි ග නං  
 ga di ta ku dom gu ñdi ta ku dom dom tat dom ta ga dit tat gat di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta tat di ga tam

S F T S S S S S S S S S F T S S B F T S S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B S/B S/B S S M S S F T S S S S S S S M S S

## Pattini pada-2

ගු ද ග න ගු ද ග න ගත් තං දොං න ගු ගු ද ග න ගත්  
 gu ñda ga ta gu ñda ga ta gat tam dom ta gu gu ñda ga ta gat

දිත් දැ හිං ගුං රෙ ග න ක දෙ ගු ද කු දොං රු ද ගු ද  
 dit da him gum re ga ta ka de gu ñda ku dom ru ñda gu ñda

M S S B FTB S S S S S B S B S/B FTB S B S

### Pattini pada-2 (surala)

රිං ත ගු දං ගත ගු දි ත ගු දං ගත ගු ද ගු ගු දි ත ගත ගත් තං දොං ගත  
 rim ta gu ñdam gata guñdi ta guñdamgata guñda gu guñdi ta gata gat tam dom ga ta  
 ෆ්ට්බ් S B S S S B M S B S S S B S B B M S S S S S S S/B S S

ග හි දි ගතං ග හි දි ගතං ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග හි ත ගත කු දොං  
 ga hi di ga tam ga hi di ga tam gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom  
 S F T S S S F T S S B F T S F T S S S M S S S B S/B

රිං ත ගු දං ගත ගත් තත් දොං ග හි ත ගු දං ගත ගත් තත් දොං ගත් තත් දොං  
 rim ta gu ñdamgata gat tat dom ga ti ta gu ñdamgata gat tat dom gat tat dom  
 ෆ්ට්බ් S B S S S S S S/B S M S B S S S S S S S/B S S S/B

දෙ ග තත් දොං දොං තත් දොං ත ග ග දිත් තත්  
 de ga tat dom dom tat dom ta ga dit tat  
 S S S S/B S/B S S/B S S M S

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ගත ගත තත් දි ගතං  
 gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta tat di ga tam  
 B F T S F T S S S S S S S M S S

### Pattini pada-3

රිං ත ගු ගු දිං ග තං ගත් තං දොං  
 rim ta gu gu ñdim ga tam gat tam dom  
 ෆ්ට්බ් S B B B S S S S S/B

[illegible]

୨ ଗା ତିମ୍      ଦିମ୍    ଦିମ୍      ୨ ଗା ତାମ୍      ଡୋମ୍    ଡୋମ୍      ଡୋମ୍    ତା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା  
 ga tim      dim dim      ga tam      dom dom      dom ta      ga di      ga ta      ga di ta      ga di      ga ta  
 S S    B S B S    S S    S/B S/B    S/B S S M S S    S M S S M S S  
 ୩ ଗୁ ନ୍ଦାମ୍      ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ୨ ଗା    ଡୋମ୍  
 gu ndam      ga di      ga ta      ga tam      dom  
 B S    S M S S    S S    S/B

## Devol segment

### Devol *pada*- movement 1

re ga ta dā him ga ta ga ta dā him gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa dā him ga ta ga ta dom  
 re ga ta dā him ga ta ga ta dom re ga ta dom re ga ta dom  
 gum di ri ki ta ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa ga hi di ga tam

FTB S S S S S S S S S S S S B S B S S S S S S S S/B  
 FTB S S S S S S S S S/B FTB S S S/B FTB S S S/B  
 B F T S S S S S S S M S S S B S B S S F T S S

### Devol *pada*- movement 2

gat diṁ ga ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ku dom  
 (Variation) gat tam ga ta ga di ta gat tam ga ta gum ṇḍi ta  
 gat diṁ ga ta ga ti gu ṇḍa ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ku dom  
 (Variation) gat tam ga ta gum gum ṇḍam ga ta gum  
 gum di ri ki ta ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu ṇḍa ga ta ga hi di ga tam  
 (End)

S S S S S S S M B S S S S S F T S S S S B S/B  
 S S S S S M S S S S S S B M S  
 S S S S S M B S S S S S F T S S S S B S/B  
 S S S S B B S S S B  
 B F T S S S S S S S M S S S B S S S S F T S S



### Devol *pada*- movement 3

(A)

ගත් ගැත do dom re ga ta do dom re ga ta gu nda gu nda ga ta do dom

S S S/B S/B FTB S S S/B S/B FTB S S B S B S S S S/B S/B

(Variation)

ගත් න ගුන්දා ගත් න ගුන්දා ගත් ත ගත් ග න ගුන්දා රෙ ග න ගුන්දා රෙ ග න ගුන්දා රෙ ග න ගුන්දා

gat ta guṇḍam gat ta guṇḍam gat ta gat ga tam ta guṇḍam re ga ta guṇḍa gu ṇḍa ga ta do dom

(bara)

ගත් දැ හිම දොං දොං රෙ ගත් දැ හිම දොං දොං රෙ ග

gat dā him dom dom re gat dā him dom dom re ga

S S S S/B S/B FTB S S S S/B S/B FTB S

දැ හිම ගුං දැ හිම ගුං දැ හිම ගත් දැ හිම දොං දොං

dā him guṁ dā him gat dā him dom dom

S S B S S B S S S S/B S/B

(End)

ගත් ති ත ග ත දොං දොං රෙ ග ති ත ග ත දොං දොං

gat ti ta ga ta dom dom re ga ti ta ga ta dom dom

S M S S S S/B S/B FTB S M S S S S/B S/B

රු ද ග න ග න ගු ද ග න ග න ගත් දි රි කි ත ග න ක දොං දොං

ru nda ga ta ga ta gu nda ga ta ga ta gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dom dom

FTB S S S S S B S S S S S S S S S/B S/B

ග හි දි ග හි දි ග හි දි ග හි දි ග හි දි ග හි දි ග හි දි ග

ga hi di ga ta ga hi di ga ta ga hi di ga ta ga hi di ga ta ga hi di ga ta

S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S F T S S S/B S/B

ගුං දි රි කි ත ග ත ග ත දිත් ත ග න ගු ද ග න ග හි දි ග ත

guṁ di ri ki ta ga tam ga tam dit ta ga ta gu nda ga ta ga hi di ga tam

B F T S S S S S S M S S S B S S S S S F T S S

## Devol pada- movement 4

ගත් ති ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත ක දො රෙ ගු ද ක දැ හිං ත (දිං)  
gat ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta ka dom re gu ñda ka dā him ta (dim)

S M S S S S M S S S S S/B FTB B S S S S B S

(Variation)  
ගත් ති ත ග ත ග ති ත ග තං ගු ගු ñda ගු ගු ñda ගු ගු ñda ගු ගු ñda  
gat ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ga tam gu gu ñda gu gu ñda gu gu ñda gu gu ñda

S M S S S S M S S S S B B S B B S B B S B B S

(Variation)  
ගත් ති ත ග ත ග දි ත ග තං රු ද ගු ñda ගු ñda ගු ñda ගු ද ගු ñda ගු ñda  
gat ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga tam ru ñda gu ñda gu ñda gu ñda gu ñda gu ñda

S M S S S S M S S S S FTB S B S B S B S B S B S

ගත් ති ත ග ත ග දි ත ග තං දො රෙ ගු ද ක දැ හිං  
gat ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga tam dom re gu ñda ka dā him

S M S S S S M S S S S S/B FTB B S S S S

(The pattern at bara)  
ග දි ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත  
ga di ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta

S M S S S S M S S S

කු දො රෙ ගු ගු ñdam ගත් දැ හිං  
ku dom re gum gu ñdam gat dā him

B S/B FTB B S S S S S

(End)  
ගත් ති ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත ක දො රෙ ගු ද ක දැ හිං  
gat ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta ka dom re gu ñda ka dā him

S M S S S S M S S S S S/B FTB B S S S S

## Devol pada- movement 5

(B)  
ග ති ත ග තං ග ති ත දො දො ග දි ත ගු ගු ñda ගු ñda ගු ñda ගු ñda  
ga ti ta ga tam ga ti ta do dom ga ti ta gu gu ñda gu ñda gu ñda gu ñda

S M S S S S M S S/B S/B S M S B B S B M S B B S B M S B

(Ending)  
රෙ ග ත දිත් ත ග ත ගු ñda ග ත ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග ත තත් දිත් තත් දි ග තං රෙ ගු ද තා  
re ga ta dit ta ga ta gu ñda ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta tat dit tat di ga tam re gu ñda ta

FTB S S M S S S B S S S B F T S F T S S S S S M S M S S FTB B S S

## Devol pada- sural 1

තත් රෙ ග න ග හි දි ග නං ගු හි දි ග නං තත් රෙ ග න ත තත් තා  
 tat re ga ta ga hi di ga tam gu hi di ga tam tat re ga ta ta tat ta

දි ග නං රෙ ගු ද නා  
 di ga tam re gu nda ta

M S S FTB B S S

## Devol pada- sural 2

තත් රෙ ග න ග හි දි ග නං ගු හි දි ග නං තත් රෙ ග න  
 tat re ga ta ga hi di ga tam gu hi di ga tam tat re ga ta

ත තත් තත් දි ග නං දිත් රෙ ග න ග හි දි ග නං  
 ta tat tat di ga tam dit re ga ta ga hi di ga tam

ගු හි දි ග නං දිත් රෙ ග න දිත් දිත් දිත් දි ග නං  
 gu hi di ga tam dit re ga ta dit dit dit di ga tam

තත් රෙ ග න ග හි දි ග නං ගු හි දි ග නං දිත් රෙ ග න ග හි දි ග නං ගු හි දි ග නං  
 tat re ga ta ga hi di ga tam gu hi di ga tam dit re ga ta ga hi di ga tam gu hi di gatam

තත් රෙ ග න දිත් රෙ ග න රෙ ග න දිත් ත ග න ගු ද ග න ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ග න තත් දිත් තත්  
 tat re ga ta dit re ga ta re ga ta dit ta ga ta gu nda gata gu hi di ga di ri ki ta gata tat dit tat

දි ග නං රෙ ගු ද නා  
 di ga tam re gu nda ta

M S S FTB B S S



## Ves iratṭiya

(Repeat 3 times)

තක් කඩ ත රි කි ට දි ගු ද ක      දි ගු ද ග දි න ග න      තත් දි ග නං  
tak kaḍa ta ri ki ta di guṇ da ka      di gu ṇda ga di ta ga ta      tat di ga taṃ

S F T S F T S M B S S      M B S S M S S S      S M S S

(Repeat 3 times)

දික් කඩ ත රි කි ට දි ගු ද ක      දි ගු ද ග දි න ග න      දිත් දි ග නං  
dik kaḍa ta ri ki ta di guṇ da ka      di gu ṇda ga di ta ga ta      dit di ga taṃ

M F T S F T S M B S S      M B S S M S S S      M M S S

තක් කඩ ත රි කි ට දි ගු ද ක      දි ගු ද ග දි න ග න      තත් දි ග නං  
tak kaḍa ta ri ki ta di guṇ da ka      di gu ṇda ga di ta ga ta      tat di ga taṃ

S F T S F T S M B S S      M B S S M S S S      S M S S

දික් කඩ ත රි කි ට දි ගු ද ක      දි ගු ද ග දි න ග න      දිත් දි ග නං  
dikk kaḍa ta ri ki ta di guṇ da ka      di gu ṇda ga di ta ga ta      dit di ga taṃ

M F T S F T S M B S S      M B S S M S S S      M M S S

තත් දි ග නං දිත් දි ග නං දි ග නං ගත් නං දි ග නං ගත් නං දි ග නං  
tat di ga taṃ dit di ga taṃ di ga taṃ gat taṃ di ga taṃ gat taṃ di ga taṃ

S M S S M M S S M S S S S M S S S S M S S

රිං ගත් නං ග න ගු දං ග දි න ග න ගත් නං දෙයං ග න ගු දං දැ හිං  
riṃ gat taṃ ga ta guṇ daṃ ga di ta ga ta gat taṃ dom ga ta gu ṇdaṃ dā hiṃ

FTB S S S S B S S M S S S S S S/B S S B S S S

## Sāṇḍā samayama segment

### Paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam-1

ගු ද ග දි න ගු ද ග නං ග න ග දි න ග න ග න ග  
gu ṇda ga di ta gu ṇda ga taṃ ga ta ga di ta ga ta ga taṃ

B S S M S B S S S S S M S S S S S S

### *Pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam-2*

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff has four measures with lyrics: *gu ṇḍa ga ḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa ga taṃ*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, and *ga ta ga taṃ*. The second staff has four measures with lyrics: *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, and *ga ti ga taṃ*. Below the notes are letters: B, S, S, M, S for the first staff and B, S, B, M, S for the second staff.

### *Pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam-3*

Four staves of musical notation. The first staff is marked with a 5/8 time signature and has four measures with lyrics: *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, and *gu ṇḍa ga taṃ*. The second staff has four measures with lyrics: *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, and *ga ti ga taṃ*. The third staff has four measures with lyrics: *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa ga taṃ*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, and *ga ta ga taṃ*. The fourth staff has four measures with lyrics: *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, *ga ta ga ḍi ta*, *gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi ta*, and *ga ti ga taṃ*. Below the notes are letters: B, S, B, M, S for the first and fourth staves, and S, S, S, M, S for the second and third staves.

*Paṇḍam pada iraiṭṭi-1*

දො න ග දි න ග න    දි ගු ද ග දි න ග න    ගු ද ග දි න ග න    ග නි න ගු දිත් තත්  
 dom ta ga di ta ga ta    di gu ṇḍa ga di ta ga ta    gu ṇḍa ga di ta ga ta    ga ti ta gu ṇḍit tat

රුං ද ග නං ග න    ගු ද ග දිත් තත්    රුං ද ග දිත් තත්    ග දි න ග දිත් තත්  
 ruṁ ṇḍa ga taṁ ga ta    guṁ ṇḍa ga dit tat    ruṁ ṇḍa ga dit tat    ga di ta ga dit tat

රුං ද ග නං ග න    ගුං ද ග දිත් තත්    රිං ග න ගු ද ගත්    දො න ගු දං ග න  
 ruṁ ṇḍa ga taṁ ga ta    guṁ ṇḍa ga dit tat    riṁ ga ta gu ṇḍa gat    dom ta gu ṇḍaṁ ga ta

ග දි ග න    ගු ද ගත්    දෙ ගු ද ගත්    දැහිං    රිං ග න ග නි ග න  
 ga di ga ta    gu ṇḍa gat    de gu ṇḍa gat    dāhim    riṁ ga ta ga ti ga ta

ග නි ගු ද දැහිං  
 ga ti gu ṇḍa dāhim

S/B S S M S S S    M B S S M S S S    B S S M S S S    S M S B S S  
 FTB S S S S S    B S S M S    FTB S S M S    S M S S M S  
 FTB S S S S S    B S S M S    FTB S S B S S    S/B S B S S S  
 S M S S B S S    S B S S    S S    FTB S S S M S S  
 S M B S S S

*Pañdam pada iratti-2*

දොං න ග දි න ග න    දොං දොං ගත් නත්    දෙ ගු ද ග දි න ග න    දොං දොං ගත් නත්  
dom ta ga di ta ga ta    dom dom gat tat    de gu ñda ga di ta ga ta    dom dom gat tat

S/B S S M S S S    S/B S/B S S    S B S S M S S S    S/B S/B S S

දොං න ග දි න ග න    දෙ ගු ද ග දි න ග න    දුං ද ග දි න ග න    ග දි න ග දිත් නත්  
dom ta ga di ta ga ta    de gu ñda ga di ta ga ta    dum ñda ga di ta ga ta    ga di ta gu ñdit tat

S/B S S M S S S    S B S S M S S S    B S S M S S S    S M S B M S

රුං ද ගු දිත් නත්    ග දි න ග දිත් නත්    රුං ද ග නං ග න    ගුං ද ග දිත් නත්  
rum ñda gu ñdit tat    ga di ta ga dit tat    rum ñda ga tam ga ta    gum ñda ga dit tat

FTB S B S S    S M S S M S    FTB S S S S S    B S S M S

රුං ද ගු දිත් නත්    ග දි න ග දිත් නත්    රුං ද ග නං ග න    ගුං ද ග දිත් නත්  
rum ñda gu ñdit tat    ga di ta ga dit tat    rum ñda ga tam ga ta    gum ñda ga dit tat

FTB S B M S    S M S S M S    FTB S S S S S    B S S M S

රිං ග න ගු ද ග න    දොං න ගු දං ග න    ග නි ග න    ගු ද ගත්  
rim ga ta gu ñda ga ta    dom ta gu ñdam ga ta    ga ti ga ta    gu ñda gat

FTB S S B S S S    S/B S B S S S    S M S S B S S

දෙ ගු ද න දැහිං    රිං ග න ග නි ග න    ග න ගු ද දැහිං  
de gu ñda ka dāhim    rim ga ta ga ti ga ta    ga ta gu ñda dāhim

S B S S S S    FTB S S S M S S    S S B S S S



*Telme sarala pada*

[illegible]

*Telme antādiya*

འི་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 rim gat tam gat tam ga ta ga ti gu nda gat dom (Repeat 3 times)  
 FTB S S S S S S S M B S S S/B  
 འི་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 rim ta ga ta ka dom ga ti ta ga ta ka dom rim ta ga tat ga ti ta ga tat  
 FTB S S S S S/B S M S S S S S/B FTB S S S S M S S S  
 ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 ga ti ga ta gum ndat de ga tat dom ta ga tat dom de gu nda ka dāhim  
 S M S S B S S S S S/B S S S S/B S B S S S S  
 འི་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 rim ga ti ga ta ga ta ga ti ga ta ga ta ga ti ga ta gum  
 FTB S M S S S S S M S S S S S M S S B  
 ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 ndat de ga tat dom ta ga tam dom re gu nda ka dāhim  
 S S S S S/B S S S S/B FTB B S S S S  
 འི་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ གཏེན་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་ ག་ མཐོང་  
 rim gat tam gat tam ga ta ga ti gu nda gat dom  
 FTB S S S S S S S M B S S S/B

***Telme pada-1***

re gu ṇḍa ga ta ka ḍom̐ ta ku ḍom̐ ga ta guṇḍa ga ta ga di ta ga tam̐ ruṇḍa ga ta

gu ṇḍa ga ta gat̐ ti ta ga ta ga ta ka ḍom̐ ta ka ḍom̐ dāhim̐

riṁ ga ta guṁ ṇḍat̐ re gu ṇḍa ka dāhim̐ riṁ ga ta gu ṇḍa ta

FTB B S S S S S S/B S S S/B S S B S S S S M S S S FTB S S S S

B S S S S M S S S S S S S/B S S S/B B S

FTB S S B S FTB B S S S S FTB S S B S S

## Telme pada-1(surala)

ගන් ගන් තන් තන් ග හි දි ග නමි දෙ ග නින් තන් ගු ද ග හි දි ග නං තන්  
gat tit tat tat ga hi di ga tam de ga tit tat guṇḍa ga hi di ga tam tat

S M S S S F T S S S S M S B S S F T S S S

ග හි දි ග නං ගු ද ග හි දි ග නං දො ග දින් න ගන් හි න ගු ද තන් තන්  
ga hi di ga tam guṇḍa ga hi di ga tam dom ga dit ta gat ti ta guṇḍa tat tat

S F T S S B S S F T S S S/B S M S S M S B S S S

දි රි කි ට ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග හි දි ග නං  
di ri ki ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga hi di ga tam

F T S S B F T S F T S S S F T S S

දිං ග න ග න ග හි ග න ගන් දො ගු ද ගන් නං  
diṁ ga ta ga ta ga ti ga ta gat dom gu ṇḍa gat tam

B S S S S S M S S S B/S B S S S

## Telme pada-2

රිං ග න ගු ගු දන් දෙ ග තන් දො දො ග න ගන් හි න ග න ගු ද ග න  
rim ga ta gu gu ṇḍat de ga tat dom dom ga ta gat ti ta ga ta gu ṇḍa ga ta

FTB S S B B S S S S S/B S/B S S S M S S S B S S S

දෙ ග තන් ග හි දි ග නං දො දො ග න දැහිං රිං ග න ගු ද නා  
de ga tat ga hi di ga tam dom dom ga ta dāhim rim ga ta gu ṇḍa ta

S S S S F T S S S/B S/B S S B S FTB S S B S S

## Telme pada-2(surala)

ගත් තිත් තත් තත් ග හි දි ග තං ගු ද ග හි දි ග තං ග ත ග ත  
gat tit tat tat ga hi di ga tam gu ñda ga hi di ga tam ga ta ga ta

S M S S S F T S S B S S F T S S S S S S

ග හි දි ග තං ග ත ගු ගු දි ත ගු ද ග හි දි ග තං දෙ ග තිත් තත් තත් ග හි දි ග තං  
ga hi di ga tam ga ta gu gu ñdi ta gu ñda ga hi di ga tam de ga tit tat tat ga hi di ga tam

S F T S S S S B B M S B S S F T S S S S M S S S F T S S

ග ත ග හි දි ග තං ග ත ග ත ග හි දි ග තං ගත් තිත් තත් තත් ග හි දි ග තං  
ga ta ga hi di ga tam ga ta ga ta ga hi di ga tam gat tit tat tat ga hi di ga tam

S S S F T S S S S S S S F T S S S M S S S S F T S S

දෙ ග තිත් තත් ගු ද ග හි දි ග තං තත් ග හි දි ග තං ගු ද ග හි දි ග තං  
de ga tit tat gu ñda ga hi di ga tam tat ga hi di ga tam gu ñda ga hi di ga tam

S S M S B S S F T S S S S F T S S B S S F T S S

දො ග දිත් ත ගත් ති ත ගු ද තත් ග හි දි ග තං  
dom ga dit ta gat ti ta gu ñda tat ga hi di ga tam

S/B S M S S M S B S S S S F T S S

දි ග ත ග ත ග ති ග ත ගත් ගත් දි රි කි ට ග ත ක දො  
dim ga ta ga ta ga ti ga ta gat gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dom

B S S S S S M S S S S F T S S S S S S/B

## Telme vañdum ata

රිං ගත් තං ගත් තං ග ත ග ති ග ත ගත් තං ග ත ග ත ග ති ත ග තං දො දො ග ත  
rim gat tam gat tam ga ta ga ti ga ta gat tam ga ta gata ga ti ta ga tam dom dom gata

FTB S S S S S S S M S S S S S S S S S M S S S S/B S/B S S

ගු ද ග ත ගු ද ගු ද ගු ද ගු දි ත ගු ද ගත් තං ග ත ග ති ගු ද ගත් දො  
gu ñda ga ta gum ñdam gu ñda gu ñda gu ñdi ta gu ñdam gat tam ga ta ga ti gu ñda gat dom

B S S S B S B S B S B M S B S S S S S S M B S S S/B

## Toran yāgaya segment

### Kavi tāla-A

dom ta ku dom ta ku dom ta ga di ta ga ta

S/B S B S/B S B S/B S S M S S S

gum dāhim gum dāhim ga ta gum dit dāhim

B S S B S S S S B M S S

### Kavi tāla-B

rim gat tam gu ñdi ta ku dom dom dāhim gat dāhim ga ta ga di ta ka re gu ñda ka

FTB S S B M S B S/B S/B S S S S S S S S M S S FTB B S S

dāhim dāhim gat dāhim ga ta gu ñda gu ñda ga di ta ka re gu ñda ka dom

S S S S S S B S B S S M S S FTB B S S S/B

### Kavi tāla-C

de ga tam ga di ta ku de ga tam gum re ga ta ka de gu ñda ka dāhim dāhim gat

S S S S M S B S S S B FTB S S S S B S S S S S S

dāhim ga ta ga di ta ku dom dom dāhim gum re ga ta ka de gu ñda ka dom

S S S S M S B S/B S/B S S B FTB S S S S B S S S/B

## Kavi tāla-D

තත් tat    තරි ta ri    ගු ඤ්දා gu ñda    ගා ta    දිත් dit    තරි ta ri    ගු ඤ්දා gu ñda    ගා ta    තත් tat

දි ගා තා di ga ta    දිත් dit    දි ගා තා di ga ta    ගා දි ga di    තා කු ta ku    දොං dom    තරි ta ri

තත් tat    දි ගා තා di ga ta

Rhythmic notation: S, S F T, B S S S, M, S F T, B S S S, S, S, M S S, S/B, S F T, S, M S S.

## Kavi tāla-E

දැහිං dā him    ගා ta    ගු ඤ්දා gu ñda    ගා ta    ගා දි ta    ගා ta    කු dom    තා ku    දොං dom    තා ku    දොං ti    තා ga    තා ta

ගා දි ta    කා di    ගු ඤ්දා gu ñda    කා gat    දැහිං dā him    ගා gat    රෙ ga    තා ka    දෙ ගු ñda    කු dom

Rhythmic notation: S S, S S, B S S S, S M S S S B, S/B S B S/B, S B S/B, M S S S, S M S S, M B S S S, S S S, S, FTB S S S, S B S B, S/B.

## Bisō kapa segment

### Bisō kapa-A

(The notes at marked points are followed with alankara - filler strokes)

The musical notation for Bisō kapa-A consists of four staves. Each staff contains notes, lyrics in Sinhala and Romanized form, and alankara (filler) strokes. The notes are marked with 'S' for short and 'B' for long. The lyrics are written in Sinhala and Romanized form. The alankara strokes are indicated by 'FTB' (Foot Tapping) and 'M' (Mudra) symbols.

Lyrics (Sinhala):  
 ගත් ගතා ගුරු රුඳා ගුරු ගත් දාහිමි ගති ගුරු ගත් දාහිමි  
 gat ga ta gu ru ṇda gu ṇda gat dāhiṃ ga ti gu ṇda gat dāhiṃ

Lyrics (Romanized):  
 dom dom ta ka re gu ṇda ka dāhiṃ di ta ga ta gu ṇda ṇda dāhiṃ  
 gum dāhiṃ gat ti ta gu ṇda gat dāhiṃ dāhiṃ gum  
 dom ta gu gu ṇda ga ta ga di ta ka re ga ta ku dom ru ṇda gu ṇda gat  
 S/B S B B S S S S M S S S FTB S S S S/B FTB S B S S

## Kālapañḍama segment

### Kālapañḍam antādiya

The musical notation for Kālapañḍam antādiya consists of a single staff. It contains notes, lyrics in Sinhala and Romanized form, and alankara (filler) strokes. The notes are marked with 'S' for short and 'B' for long. The lyrics are written in Sinhala and Romanized form. The alankara strokes are indicated by 'S/B' (Short/Long) and 'FTB' (Foot Tapping) symbols.

Lyrics (Sinhala):  
 දාහිමි ගතා ගති ගතා කාදො ගතා ගුරුතා ගුරුකා දාහිමි  
 dāhiṃ ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ka dom ga ta gu ṇdi ta gu ṇda ka dāhiṃ

Lyrics (Romanized):  
 S S S S S M S S S S/B S S B M S B S S S S S

# Kālapañdam padē

රිං දැහිං රු ද ගු ද ගත් තං ගත් ගු දං ග තං ගුං දො ගු ද ගත් දැහිං ගුං  
 rim dāhim ruṇḍa guṇḍa gat tam gat guṇḍam gatam gum dom guṇḍa gat dāhim gum

1  
 ෆ්ට්බ් S S ෆ්ට්බ් S B S S S S B S S S B S/B B S S S S B

ගත් තං ග දි ත ගු දි ත ග දි ත ගුං දො ගු ද දැහිං ග ත ගුං  
 gat tam ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta ga di ta gum dom guṇḍa dāhim ga ta gum

2.3.4 ...  
 S S S M S B M S S M S B S/B B S S S S S B

රිං ති ත ග ත ග දි ත ග ත ගත් තං ති ත ගු ද ගු දි ත ගු ද ගත් දැහිං ගත් දැහිං  
 rim ti ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta gat tam ti ta guṇḍa guṇḍita guṇḍa gat dāhim gat dāhim

ෆ්ට්බ් M S S S S M S S S S S M S B S B M S B S S S S S S S S

ගුං දැහිං ගුං දැහිං දො ත ගු ගු ṇḍā ga ta ගු ṇḍi ta ka re ga ta ku dom  
 gum dāhim gum dāhim dom ta gu gu ṇḍā ga ta gu ṇḍi ta ka re ga ta ku dom

B S S B S S S/B S B B S S S B M S S S ෆ්ට්බ් S S S/B

රිං දැහිං රු ද ගු ද ගත් තං ග දි ත ගු දි ත ග දි ත ගුං දො ගු ද දැහිං ග ත ගුං  
 rim dāhim ruṇḍa guṇḍa gat tam ga di ta gu ṇḍi ta ga di ta gum dom guṇḍa dāhim gata gum

ෆ්ට්බ් S S ෆ්ට්බ් S B S S S S M S B M S S M S B S/B B S S S S S B

රිං ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ග ත ග දි ත ක දි ගු ṇḍa ka දැහිං  
 rim ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ga ta ga di ta ka di gu ṇḍa ka dāhim

ෆ්ට්බ් S S S M S S S M S S S M S S S M S S M B S S S S

ගුං දං ග ත ගු ද දැහිං ග දි ග ත ගුං දං ග ත ගු ද දැහිං ගු ṇḍa ගු ṇḍa  
 gumṇḍam ga ta guṇḍa dāhim ga di gata gumṇḍam ga ta gu ṇḍa dāhim gu ṇḍa guṇḍa

B S S S B S S S S M S S B S S S B S S S S B S B S



# Iraṭṭiya

Repeat 3 times

දොං න ග නං ගත් ති න ග න ග ති න ග න කු දොං දොං ග න  
dom ta ga tam gat ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom dom ga ta

S/B S S S S M S S S S M S S S B S/B S/B S S

Repeat 3 times

දි ගු ද ග නං ගත් ති න ග න ග ති න ග න කු දොං දොං ග න  
di gu ṇda ga tam gat ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom dom ga ta

M S S S S S M S S S S M S S S B S/B S/B S S

දොං න ග නං ගත් ති න ග න ග ති න ග න කු දොං දොං ග න  
dom ta ga tam gat ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom dom ga ta

S/B S S S S M S S S S M S S S B S/B S/B S S

දි ගු ද ග නං ගත් ති න ග න ග ති න ග න කු දොං දොං ග න  
di gu ṇda ga tam gat ti ta ga ta ga ti ta ga ta ku dom dom ga ta

M B S S S S M S S S S M S S S B S/B S/B S S

දොං න ග නං ගත් ති න ග න දෙ ගු ද ග නං ගත් ති න ග න  
dom ta ga tam gat ti ta ga ta de gu ṇda ga tam gat ti ta ga ta

S/B S S S S M S S S S B S S S S M S S S

දොං න ග නං දෙ ගු ද ග නං ග දිත් න ගු ද ගත් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැහිං  
dom ta ga tam de gu ṇda ga tam ga dit ta gu ṇda gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

S/B S S S S B S S S S M S S S S F T S S S S S S S

රිං ග න ග න ග දිත් න ගත් දොං දෙ ගු ද ක දැහිං  
rim ga ta ga ta ga dit ta gat dom de gu ṇda ka dāhim

FTB S S S S S M S S S/B S B S S S S

***Magul bera pattern (vaṭṭam 1)***

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රිම ගත දැ හිං ගත දැ හිං දොං ත කු දොං රිම ගා තා ගත රිම ගුං  
BFT S S S S S S B/S S B B/S BFT S S S BFT B

රෙ ග තා ගුංදා ග තා රෙ ග තා ගුංදා ග ති ග තා ගුං රෙ ග තා ගුංදා  
BFT S S B S S S BFT S S B S S M S S B BFT S S B S

දැහිං ත ගත් ත ගත් ත ග තං දෙ ග ත ගුං ද ගුං ද ගුං ද  
dāhim ta gat ta gat ta ga tam de ga ta gum ñda gum ñda guñdam

දෙ ග ත ගත් ත ගත් ත ග තං දෙ ග ත ගුං ද ගුං ද ගුං ද දෙ ග ත ගත් ත ගත් ත දැහිං  
de ga ta gat ta gat ta gatam de ga ta gum ñda gum ñda guñdam degata gat ta gat ta dāhim

රු දො ගුංදා දැහිං රු දො ගුංදා ග තා ගු ගුංදා ගා ග තා ගුංදා ගත  
ru ñdam guñdam dāhim ru ñdam guñdam ga ta gu guñda gata ga ti ta guñda gatam

දැහිං ග ත ගු ද ගු ද ගු දි ත කු දොං ති ටතක දැහිං ග ත ග ති ග ත ග ති ත ග තං දෙ ග  
dāhim ga ta guñdagunḍa guñdi taku domki ti ta ka dāhim ga ta ga ti ga ta ga ti ta ga tam de ga

තං ග ත ගුං ගු ද ගුං ද ගු දො ග තං ග ත ග දි ග ත ගත් ත ග තං දෙ ග  
tam ga ta gum gu ñda gumñdagu ñdamde ga tam ga ta ga di ga ta gat ta ga tam de ga

තං ග ත ගුං ගු ද ගු දො ග තං ග ත ග ති ග ත ග දි ත ක දෙ ගු ද ක දැහිං  
tam ga ta gu guñda gumñdagu ñdamde ga tam ga ta ga ti ga ta ga di ta ka de gu ñdaka dāhim

දොං ත ගත් දැ හිං රිම ග තා ගත දැ හිං  
dom ta gat dā him rim ga ta gat dā him

රිම ගා දි තා ගා දි තා ගු ඛ්දි තා ගු ඛ්දි තා ගු ඛ්දා ග තා ගු ඛ්දා  
rim ga di ta ga di ta gu ñdi ta gu ñdi ta gu ñdat ga ta gu ñdat

BFT S M S S M S B M S B M S B S S S B S

### Magul bera pattern (vaṭṭam 3)

දැහිමි    න    ශං    රි    රි    ද    ගත්    දැහිමි    න    ගත්    රි    රි    ද    ගත්  
(repeat 4X)

dāhim ta guṃ ruṃ ru ṇḁa gat dāhim ta gat ruṃ ru ṇḁa gat

S S S B FTB FTB S S S S S FT S FT S S S  
දැහිමි    ෙ    න    ග    න    ෙ    දි    න    ග    න    ෙ    දි    න    ෙ    ද    ගත්    න    ෙ    ෙ    ද    ගත්    දි    න    ගත්    දැහිමි  
dāhim riṃ ta ga ta ga di ta ga ta guṇḁi ta guṇḁa gat ta guṃ ṇḁa gat diṭ ta gat dāhim

S S FTB S S S S M S S S B M S B S S S B S S M S S S S  
දො    දො    න    ග    නි    ෙ    ද    න    දැහිමි    දො    දො    ග    නි    ෙ    ද    න    දැහිමි  
dom dom ga ti guṇḁam tam dāhim dom dom ga ti guṇḁam tam dāhim

B/S B/S S S M B S S S S B/S B/S S M B S S S S  
දො    දො    ග    නි    ෙ    ද    න    ග    නි    ෙ    ද    න    ග    නි    ෙ    ද    න    ග    න    දැහිමි  
dom dom ga ti guṇḁam tam ga ti guṇḁam tam ga ti guṇḁam tam ga tam dā him

B/S B/S S M B S S S S M B S S S S M B S S S S S S  
ෙ    න    ගත්    න    ග    නි    න    ගත්    න    ග    නි    න    ගත්    න    ග    න    දො    ග    න  
riṃ ta gat tam ga ti ta gat tam ga ti ta gat tam ga tam dom ga ta

FTB S S S S M S S S S M S S S S S S B/S S S  
ශ    දි    න    ගත්    න    ෙ    දි    න    ගත්    න    ෙ    දි    න    ගත්    න    ෙ    න    දො    ග    න  
gu ṇḁi ta gat tam gu ṇḁi ta gat tam gu ṇḁi ta gat tam ga tam dom ga ta

B M S S S B M S S S B M S S S S S S B/S S S  
ග    නි    න    ගත්    න    ග    න    දො    ග    න    ෙ    දි    න    ගත්    න    ග    න    දැහිමි  
ga ti ta gat tam ga tam dom ga ta gu ṇḁi ta gat tam ga tam dāhim

S M S S S S S B/S S S B M S S S S S S S S  
ෙ    ග    න    දැහිමි    ෙ    ග    න    ග    න    ග    න    ෙ    ද    ෙ    ෙ    ෙ    ෙ    ෙ    ෙ  
riṃ ga tam dā him riṃ ga tam ga ta ga ti ta gu ṇḁa guṃ ṇḁam

FTB S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S  
දැහිමි  
dāhim

S  
ෙ    ග    න    ග    න    ග    න    ගත්    දැහිමි    දැහිමි    දැහිමි    ගත්    දැහිමි    දො    දො    දැහිමි  
riṃ ga ta ga ta ga ta gat dāhim dāhim dāhim gat dāhim dom dom dāhim

FTB S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S B/S B/S S S  
දො    දැහිමි    දො    දැහිමි    දො    න    ෙ    ද    දෙ    ග    න    න    ග    දි    න    ග    දි    න  
dom dāhim dom dāhim dom ta guṇḁam de ga tam ta ga di ta ga di ta

B/S S S B/S S S B/S S B S S S S S S M S S M S  
ශ    දි    ෙ    කි    ෙ    ෙ    දි    න    ෙ    ද    ග    න    ෙ    ද    ෙ    ෙ    දැහිමි    දො  
guṃ ṇḁi ri ki ta ga di ta guṇḁam ga ta gu ṇḁam dā him dom

B F T S S S M S B S S S B S S S S B/S  
B F T S S S M S B S S S B S S S S B/S

acell. dāhim rim ga ta ga di ga ta gum ṇda gat dāhim

rim ga ta ga di ga ta gum ṇda ga tam ga ta gat tam ga di ga ta gum ṇda ga tam ga ta

gat ta gum ṇda ga ta gum ṇda ga tam ga ta gu ṇdam ga di ta ga ta gum ṇda ga tam ga ta

ga di ta ka di ri ki ta ga ta ga di ta ka dāhim rim ga tam ga tam

ga ti ga tam ga tam gat tam ga tam gum gu ṇdam dāhim

## Appendix 1-E: Patterns that accompany salutations to deities (*vāṇḍum at*)

### *Vāṇḍum ata-A*

**Phrase 1**

dom ga tam ga ta gat ta ga di ta ga ta

S/B S S S S S S S M S S S

**Phrase 2**

dom ga tam ga ta guṇ da ga di ta ga ta

S/B S S S S B S S M S S S

**Phrase 3**

dom ga tam dom ga tam

S/B S S S/B S S

**Phrase 4**

gat di ri ki ta gat di ri ki ta gat tat dāhim (x3)

S F T S S S F T S S S S S S

dom guṇ ṇḍa gat dāhim gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

S/B B S S S S F T S S S S S S S S

### *Vāṇḍum ata-B*

ru ṇḍat gat ta ga tat gat ta gu ṇḍat gat ta ga tat dom

FTB S S S S S S B S S S S S/B

ru ṇḍat gat ta ga tat dom ga tat dom gu ṇḍat dom

FTB S S S S S/B S S S/B B S S/B

guṇ ṇḍi ri ki ta gat di ri ki ta gat tat dāhim gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

B F T S S S F T S S S S S F T S S S F T S S

(Repeated 3 times)

gum ñda gat ta gat ga tam ta gat ta gum ñda ga di ga tam ta

B S S S S S S S S B S S M S S S

gu ñdam gat ta gum ñdam dāhim ga tam gat ta gat tat dāhim

B S S S B S S S S S S S S S S S S

gum ñda guñdam ga ti ga tam ta gat tat dāhim gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

B S B S S M S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S

## Vāṇḍum ata-E

දොං න ග නත් ග න ගත් නත් දැ හිං ග දි න ග නත් ග න ගත් නත් දැ හිං ගත් නත් දැ හිං  
 dom ta ga tat ga ta gat tat dā him ga di ta ga tat ga ta gat tat dā him gat tat dā him

දෙ ග නත් දැ හිං දොං නත් දොං න ග දි නත් ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න ග නත් දි ග නං  
 de ga tat dā him dom tat dom ta ga dit tat gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta ga ta tat di ga tam

දොං ග නත් ගුං දොං ග නත් ගුං දොං දැ හිං ගුං ද ගුං ද ගුං න ග දි ග න ගුං ගු ද ක  
 dom ga tat gum dom ga tat gum dom dā him gumṇḍa gumṇḍagata gadi ga ta gum guṇḍaka

S/B S S S S S S S S S S S M S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S M S S  
 S S S S S S S/B S S/B S S M S B F T S F T S S S S S S S S S M S S

(last line is repeated 3 times. The first akṣara dom is replaced with dāhim on repeats. Pattern ends on dāhim)

## Vāṇḍum ata-F

දොං න ගත් න ගත් න ග නං ගත් න ග දි න ග දි ගු ṇḍා ගා තා  
 dom ta gat ta gat ta ga tam gat ta ga di ta ga di gu ṇḍa ga ta

දෙ ගු ṇḍා ගත් න ගත් න ග නං ගත් න ග දි න ග දි ගු ṇḍා ගා තා  
 de gu ṇḍa gat ta gat ta ga tam gat ta ga di ta ga di gu ṇḍa ga ta

දොං න ගත් න ගත් න ග නං දෙ ගු ṇḍා ගත් න ගත් න ග නං  
 dom ta gat ta gat ta ga tam de gu ṇḍa gat ta gat ta ga tam

රුං ද ගු ṇḍා ගත් න ගත් න ග නං ග දි ග න ගු ද ගත් දිත් නත්  
 rum ṇḍa gu ṇḍam gat ta ga tam ga di ga ta gu ṇḍa gat dit tat

ගත් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැ හිං  
 gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

රිං ග න ග න ග දි ග න ග න ගු ṇḍා ගා තා ගා තා ග දි ගු ṇḍා ගත්  
 rim ga ta ga ta ga di ga ta ga ta gu ṇḍa ga ta ga ta ga di gu ṇḍa gat

ග නං ගු ṇḍා ග නි ගු ද ගත් රිං ග නං  
 ga tam gu ṇḍam ga ti guṇḍa gat rim ga tam

S/B S S S S S S S S S S S M S S S S S S S S S S S M B S S S  
 S B S S S S S S S S S S S M S S B S S S M S S  
 S/B S S S S S S S S S S S B S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S  
 FTB S B S S S S S S S S S M S S B S S S M S S  
 S S S B S S M B S S FTB S S

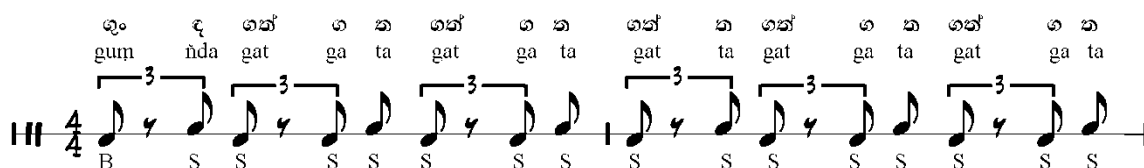


## Appendix 1-F: Patterns where dancers go around in a circle (*vaṭṭam pada*)

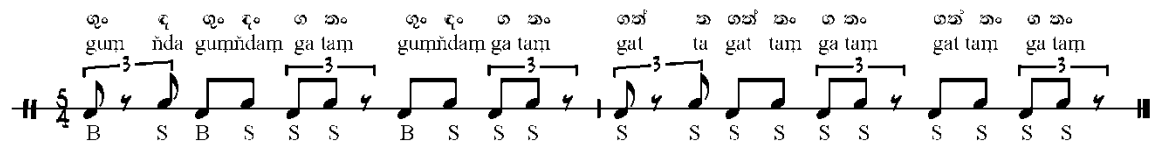
### *Vaṭṭam pada-A*



### *Vaṭṭam pada-B*



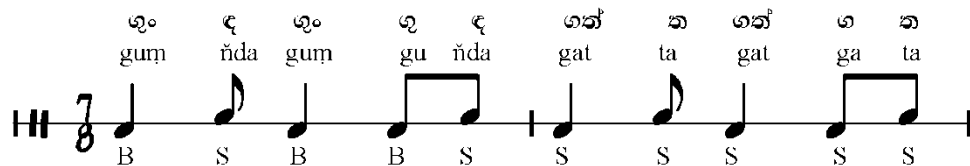
### *Vaṭṭam pada-C*



### *Vaṭṭam pada-D*



### *Vaṭṭam pada-E*



## Appendix 1-G: Patterns performed to seek blessings from the deities and bless the audience

### *Yahan dākma*

#### Section A

ෙරි  
rim  
 ගත්  
gat  
 ගු දං  
gu ñdam  
 ගත්  
gat  
 දැ හිං  
da him  
 ගත්  
gat  
 දැ හිං  
da him

ෙරි  
dim  
 ග  
ga  
 න  
ta  
 ගුං  
gum  
 ගු දං  
gu ñda  
 ගත්  
gat  
 දැ හිං  
da him  
 ගුං  
gum  
 දොං  
dom  
 දැ හිං  
da him  
 ගුං  
gum

FTB  
S  
B S  
S  
S S  
S  
S S

M  
S  
S  
B  
B  
S  
S  
S S  
B  
S/B  
S S  
B

#### Section B

ෙර ගු ද ගත්  
re gu ñda gat  
 ෙර ගු ද ගත්  
de gu ñda gat  
 දැ හිං  
da him  
 න ග න  
ta ga ta  
 ග නි න ගුං  
ga ti ta gum

ෙර ගු ද ගත්  
re gu ñda gat  
 ෙර ගු ද ගත්  
de gu ñda gat  
 දොං  
dom  
 න ගු ද ගත්  
ta gu ñda gat  
 න ග න  
ta ga ta

ගුං  
gum  
 ද හ්‍රි  
ñda  
 ගු ද ගත්  
gu ñda gat  
 න  
ta  
 ගත්  
gat  
 දොං  
dom  
 න ගත්  
ta gat  
 දොං  
dom  
 න ගත්  
ta gat

දොං  
dom  
 න ග න  
ta ga ta  
 ගත් නත්  
gat tat  
 දැ හිං  
dahim  
 ගත් දි ෙරි නි ෙරි  
gat di ri ki ta  
 ග න න  
ga ta ka  
 දැ හිං  
dahim

BFT B S S  
BFT B S S  
S S  
S S S  
S M S B  
BFT B S S  
M B S S  
B/S  
S B S  
S  
S S S  
B S B S  
S  
S S  
B/S  
S S  
B/S  
S S  
B/S  
S S S  
S S S  
S S  
S S  
S S  
S F T S S  
S M S S S

### Section C (also labeled as *vāṇḍum ata-B*)

ru ṇḍat gat ta ga tat gat ta gu ṇḍat gat ta ga tat dom  
 ru ṇḍat gat ta ga tat dom ga tat dom gu ṇḍat dom  
 gum ṇḍi ri ki ta gat di ri ki ta gat tat dāhim gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

FTB S S S S S S S B S S S S S S/B  
 FTB S S S S S S/B S S S/B B S S/B  
 B F T S S S F T S S S S S S F T S S S F T S S

### Section D

rim ga tam ga ti ta ga ta ga ti ga tam gu ṇḍi ta gu ṇḍa  
 gu ṇḍa ga ta ka de gu ṇḍa ga ta ga di ga ta ka gum

FTB S S S M S S S M S S B M S B S  
 B S S S S S B S S S S M S S S B

### Section E

gum gu ṇḍa ga tam gat ga tam ga tam

B B S S S S S S S

### Variation (*gaman tālaya*)

gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍi gu ṇḍa gat ta ga tam ga ta

B S B M B S S S S S S

### *Mōsam pada-A*

දොං ග න ගු ද ග න ගු දි න කු දැහිං ග න ගත් ග න ග දි ග න ග දි න ක දැහිං ග න  
 dom ga ta guṇḍa gata guṇḍi ta ku dāhim gata gat gata ga di gata ga di ta ka dāhim ga ta

S/B S S B S S S B M S S S S S S S S S S S M S S S M S S S S S S S

### *Mōsam pada-B*

ගුං දං ග න ගුං දැහිං දි න ග න ගත් තං ග න ගත් දැහිං දි න ග න  
 guṇḍam ga ta guṇ dāhim di ta ga ta gat tam ga ta gat dāhim di ta ga ta

B S S S B S S M S S S S S S S S S S S M S S S

### *Mōsam pada-C*

ගු දි ගු ද ග න ගු දි ගු ද දැහිං ග දි ග න ග න ග දි ග න දැහිං  
 gu ṇḍi gu ṇḍa ga ta gu ṇḍi gu ṇḍa dāhim ga di ga ta ga ta ga di ga ta dāhim

B M B S S S B M B S S S S M S S S S S S M S S S S S

### *Āvaḍana padē*

දොං ග න ග න ග න ග න ග න ගු ද ගු ද ග න ග දි ග න ග න  
 dom ga ta ga ta ga ta ga ta ga ta gu ṇḍa gu ṇḍa ga ta ga di ga ta ga ta

B/S S S S S S S S S S B S B S S S S S M S S S S S

ගත් ගත් දැහිං ගත් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැහිං  
 gat tat dāhim gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dāhim

S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S S S



## Surala-1

**Phrase 1**

දොං න ග නං      ග හි දි ග නං  
dom ta ga tam      ga hi di ga tam

**Phrase 2**

ගත් න දිත් න      ග හි ගු ද ග න  
gat ta dit ta      ga ti gu ñda ga ta

**Phrase 3**

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න      තත් දිත් තත්      දි ග නං      ග හි න      ග හි ගු ද ගත්      දොං  
gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta      tat dit tat      di ga tam      ga ti ta      ga ti gu ñda gat      dom

## Surala-2

**Phrase 1**

දොං න ග නං      ග හි දි ග නං  
dom ta ga tam      ga hi di ga tam

**Phrase 2**

ගත් න දිත් න      ග හි ගු ද ග න  
gat ta dit ta      ga ti gu ñda ga ta

**Phrase 3**

රෙ ග න දිත් න      ග හි ගු ද ග න      ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න  
re ga ta dit ta      ga ti gu ñda ga ta      gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න      තත් දිත් තත්      දි ග නං      ග හි න      ග හි ගු ද ගත්      දොං  
gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta      tat dit tat      di ga tam      ga ti ta      ga ti gu ñda gat      dom

## Surala-3

**Phrase 1**

දොං න ග නං ග හි දි ග නං  
dom ta ga tam ga hi di ga tam

**Phrase 2**

ගත් න දිත් න ග හි ගු ද ග න  
gat ta dit ta ga ti gu ñda ga ta

**Phrase 3**

ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට ග න  
gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta gu hi di ga di ri ki ta ga ta

තත් දිත් තත් දි ග නං ග හි න ග හි ගු ද ගත් දොං  
tat dit tat di ga tam ga ti ta ga ti gu ñda gat dom

## Pattern in bara

දොං රිං ගත් දැහිං ගත් ගුං ගුං දැහිං දිං ගත් දැහිං  
dom rin gat dahim gat gum gum dahim dim gat dahim

දොං දොං ගත් දැහිං තත් දිත් නොං නං දැහිං  
dom dom gat dahim tat dit tom nam dahim

රිං ග න ගා දි ග න ගුං ගුං දැහිං  
rin ga ta ga di ga ta gum gum dahim

ගත් දැහිං දොං දොං ගු හි දි ග දි රි කි ට දොං  
gat dahim dom dom gu hi di ga di ri ki ta dom

## *Pidēni pada*

ගුං ග න ග න ග න  
 guṃ ga ta ga ta ga ta

B S S S S S S

### **Variation 1**

ගු ṇ්දි ගු ṇ්දා ග න ග න  
 gu ṇḍi guṇḍa ga ta ga ta

B M B S S S S S

### **Variation 2**

ගුං ග න ග න ග න ග න ග න ගු ṇ්දා ග න  
 guṃ ga ta ga ta ga ta ga ta ga ta gu ṇḍa ga ta

B S S S S S S S S S S B S S S

### **Variation 3**

ගුං ගත් න ගත් න ගත් න ගත් න ගත් න ගුං ග නං න  
 guṃ gat ta gat ta gat ta gat ta gat ta guṃ ga taṃ ta

B S S S S S S S S S S B S S S



## Appendix 1-I: Introductory patterns (*ārambhaka pada*)

### *Ārambhaka pada-A*

දොං න ගන් රෙ ග න ග න ගු ද ගන් රෙ ග න ග න ගු ද ගන් රු ගු ද ගන් රු ගු ද ගන්  
 dom ta gat re ga ta ga ta guṇḍa gat re ga ta ga ta guṇḍa gat ru guṇḍa gat ru guṇḍa gat  
 රු ගු ද ගන් න ගු ද ගන් නන් දැ හිං ගන් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැ හිං  
 ru guṇḍa gat ta guṇḍa gat tat dā him gat di ri ki ṭa ga ta ka dā him  
 FTB S S S S B S S FTB S S S S B S S FTB B S S FTB B S S  
 FTB B S S S B S S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S

### *Ārambhaka pada-B*

දෙ ග නං දෙ ග නං දෙ ග නි න ග න ග දි න ක රෙ ගු ද ක දොං  
 de ga tam de ga tam de ga ti ta ga ta ga di ta ka re gu ṇḍa ka dom  
 S S S S S S S S M S S S S M S S FTB B S S S S/B

### *Ārambhaka pada-C*

රෙ ග න ගන් න ග දි ගු ද ගන් දෙ ග න ගන් න  
 re ga ta gat ta ga di gu ṇḍa gat de ga ta gat ta  
 FTB S S S S S M B S S S S S S S S S S  
 ග දි ගු ද ගන් දෙ ග න ගන් න ග දි ග න ගන්  
 ga di gu ṇḍa gat de ga ta gat ta ga di ga ta gat  
 S M B S S S S S S S S S M S S S S  
 රු ද ගු ද ග දි ග නං න ගන් කං දැහිං ගන් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැහිං  
 ru ṇḍa gu ṇḍam ga di ga tam ta gat tam dāhim gat di ri ki ṭa ga ta ka dāhim  
 FTB S B S S M S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S  
 ග නි න ග නි ගු ද ගන් දොං ගු දි න ග නි ගු ද ගන් දොං දොං න තර් ද තර් ද ග නං  
 ga ti ta ga ti guṇḍa gat dom guṇḍi ta ga ti guṇḍa gat dom dom ta tar dā tar dā ga tam  
 S M S S M B S S S/B B M S S M B S S S/B S/B S S F T S S F T S S S S  
 රු ද ගු ද ග දි ග නං න ගන් කන් දැහිං ගන් දි රි කි ට ග න ක දැහිං දොං  
 ru ṇḍa gu ṇḍam ga di ga tam ta gat tam dāhim gat di ri ki ṭa ga ta ka dāhim dom  
 FTB S B S S M S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S S/B

### *Ārambhaka pada-D*

(Repeated till dancer stops spinning)

ru ṇda gu ṇda gat ta gum ṇda gat tat dā him gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dā him

FTB S B S S S B S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S

### *Ārambhaka pada-E*

dā him dit dā him dit dā him dit dā him re ga ta di ta ga ta

ga di ta gu ṇda gu ṇdam dā him dā him ta gum

S S M S S M S S FTB S M S S S B S B S S S S S S B

### *Ārambhaka pada-F*

dom ta ga ta gat tat dā him gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dā him

S/B S S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S

### *Ārambhaka pada-F (variation)*

rum ṇda gu ṇdam ga di ga tam ta gat tat dā him gat di ri ki ta ga ta ka dā him

FTB S B S S M S S S S S S S F T S S S S S S S S

### *Ārambhaka pada-G*

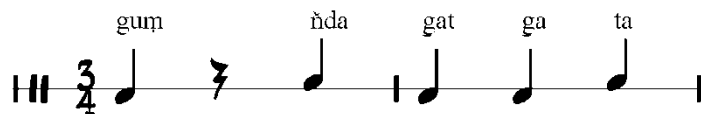
(Repeat till cued)

dā him dit dā him dit dā him ta gum

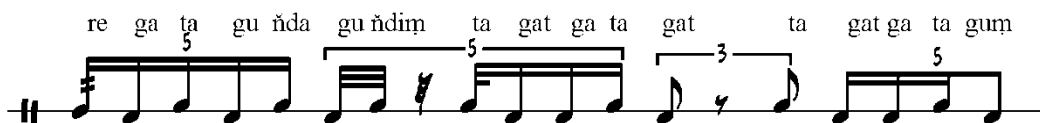
S S M S S M S S S B

## Appendix 1-J: Patterns of the *bali* ritual

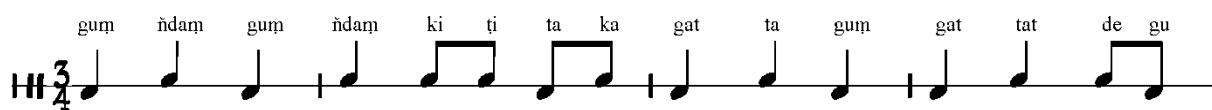
### *Bali* pattern-A



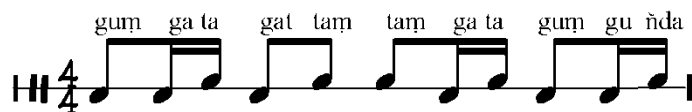
### *Bali* pattern-B



### *Bali* pattern-C



### *Bali* pattern-D



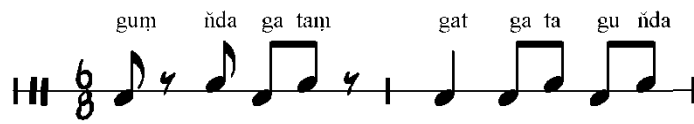
### *Bali* pattern-E



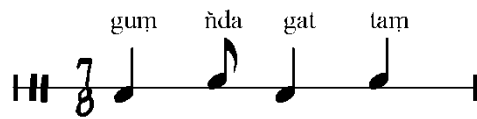
### *Bali* pattern-F



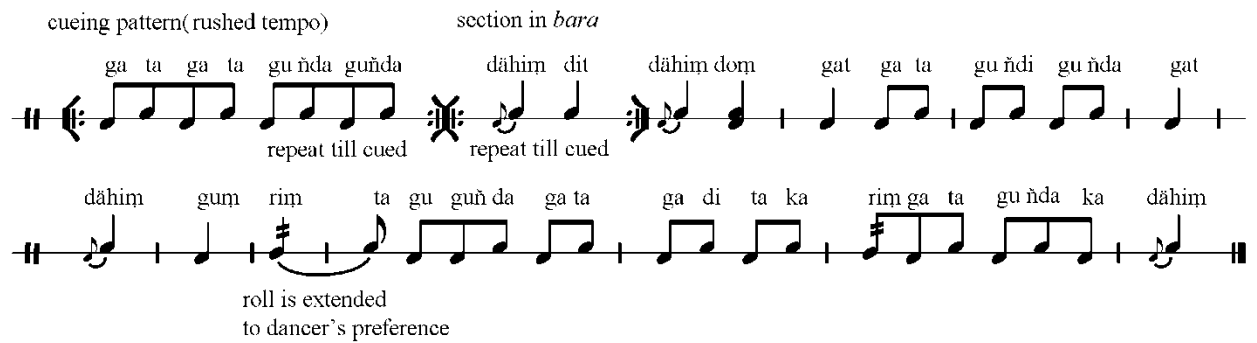
### Bali pattern-G



### Bali pattern-H

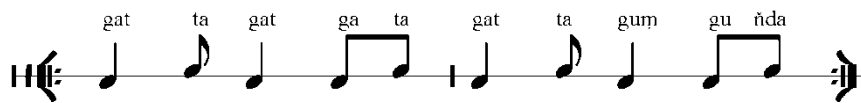


### Transition pattern-A

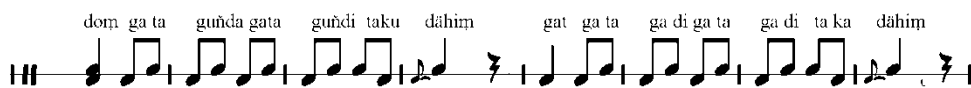


### Transition pattern-B

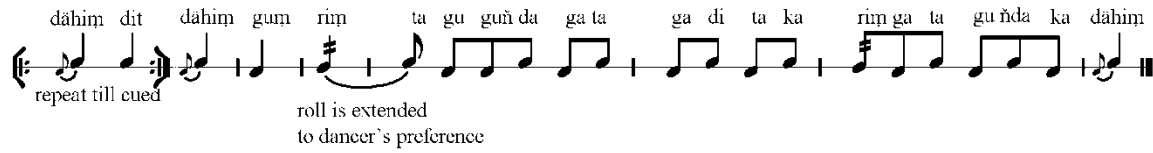
#### Section A



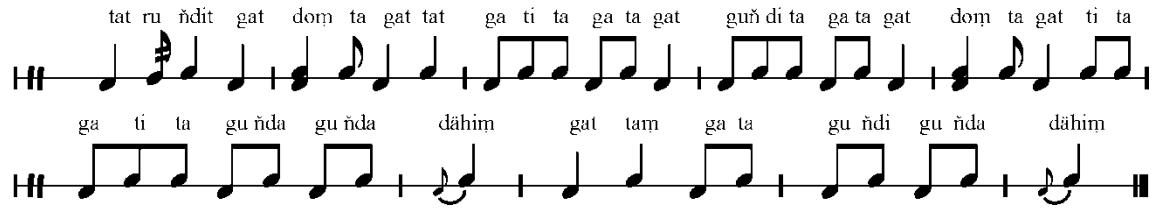
#### Section B



## Section C

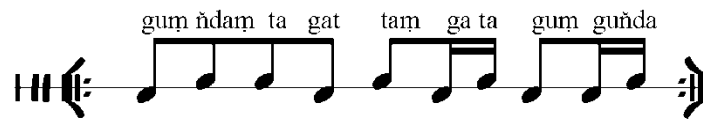


## Section D



## Transition pattern-C

### Section A



### Section B

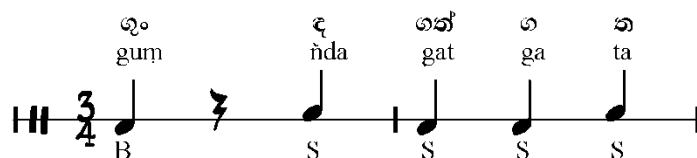


## Section C



## Appendix 1-K: The patterns of the *tovil* ritual

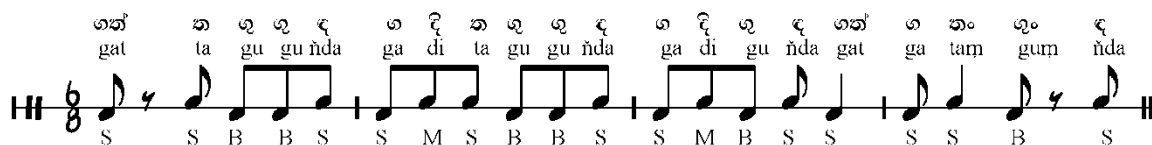
### *Tovil* pattern-A



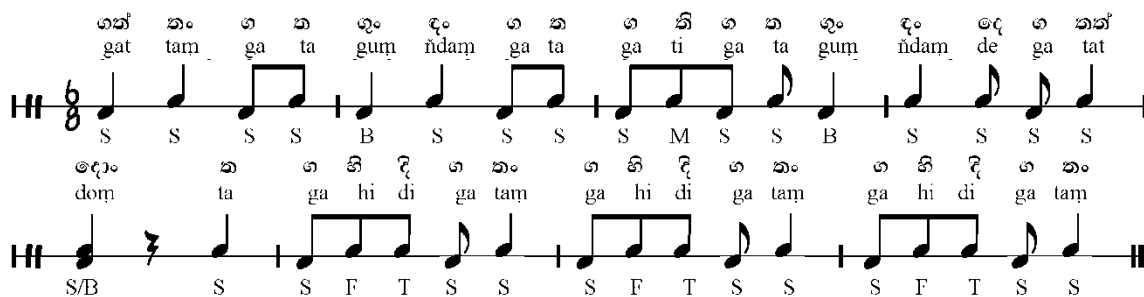
### *Hat pada pelapāliya* (king-coconut)



### *Hat pada pelapāliya* (live rooster)



### *Hat pada pelapāliya* (shawl)



*Hat pada pelapāliya (hand claps)*

ගුං ද ගත් න ගත් න ගත් න ගුං ග නං  
gum ñda gat ta gat ta gat ta gum ga tam ga di ga tam ta

B S S S S S S S B S S S M S S S

*Yak panti*

තත් දොං තත් තත් දොං න ග දි න ග න දි රි කි ට දොං තත් තත් දොං න කු දොං රිං  
tat dom tat tat dom ta ga di ta ga ta di ri ki ta dom tat tat dom ta ku dom rim

S S/B S S S/B S S M S S S F T S S S/B S S S/B S B S/B FTB

තා ගා දි තා ගා තා ගු ගුං ñda ගා දි තා ගා තා ගුං දා හිං  
ta ga di ta ga ta gu gum ñda ga di ta ga ta gum da him

S S S M S S S B B S S M S S S B S S

ගුං දා හිං ත ර දිත් ග න ගුං දා හිං ති න ග න ගුං  
gum da him ta r dit ga ta gum da him ti ta ga ta gum

B S S S F T S S S B S S M S S S B

## Appendix 2: Glossary of Selected Sinhala Terms

<i>aḍauva</i>	- also known as <i>saudama</i> . It is a salutation verse in which the drumming mimics the phonetics of each line of the verse.
<i>adura</i>	- priest
<i>akṣara</i>	- drum syllables
<i>alankāra</i>	- drum embellishments
<i>ālavanguva</i>	- long hand-held chisel
<i>aṅgul</i>	- length from the first joint above the palm, to the end of the index finger
<i>aṅguru kabala</i>	- incense holder
<i>antādiya</i> (plural <i>antādi</i> )	- prelude pattern
<i>ārambhaka pada</i>	- introductory pattern
<i>āvadana padē</i>	- blessing pattern
<i>bali</i>	- also known as <i>bali yāga</i> , <i>bali śāntikaṛma</i> , <i>bali tovil</i> ritual dedicated to planetary deities
<i>bara</i>	- slow and heavy tempo
<i>bera gāṭiya</i>	- the woven ring around the edge of the drumhead
<i>bera kaṇḍa</i>	- body of the drum
<i>bera lanuva</i>	- waist strap of the drum
<i>berava</i>	- the caste to which the drummers traditionally belong
<i>beraya</i>	- drum
<i>bhāvaprakāṣana</i>	- expression of characteristics of a supernatural beings through dance
<i>bisō kapa</i>	- bough of the Queen
<i>boraṇḍaṃ ratā</i>	- decorations on the drum
<i>boruvara ādīma</i>	- fake strapping
<i>dalumura pūjāva</i>	- offering of betel leaves
<i>daṇḍa</i>	- stick
<i>davula</i>	- the main instrument of the Sabaragamuwa
<i>deviyaṇṭa pin dīma</i>	- giving thanks to deities
<i>deviyo</i>	- deities
<i>devol maḍuva</i>	- outdoor communal ritual of the Low-Country
<i>dola</i>	- food offerings for demons
<i>doloha deviyo</i>	- Twelve Gods
<i>dōsa</i>	- malevolent influences
<i>dummala</i>	- resin
<i>dummala padē</i>	- pattern associated with incensing ritual objects or ritual space
<i>gaman tālaya</i>	- walking metre, characteristic Low-Country dance
<i>gammaḍuva</i>	- larger, older version of the <i>devol maḍuva</i>
<i>gāṭa beraya</i>	- the main instrument of the Up-Country
<i>gāṭivāla</i>	- a bamboo ring placed around the edge of the drum
<i>gihi pirit</i>	- Buddhist chanting ceremony conducted by lay people
<i>gok kola</i>	- tender coconut leaves
<i>graha deviyo</i>	- planetary deities
<i>graha pūjāva</i>	- a commonly held ritual for planetary deities



<i>hai taṭṭuva</i>	- thicker membrane of the Low-Country drum
<i>hak geḍiya</i>	- conch shell
<i>hākma</i>	- thick outer layer of skin on the drum. Also known as <i>kāpum</i>
	<i>hama</i>
<i>hamāra pada, hamāre</i>	- ending pattern
<i>haramba</i>	- exercises
<i>hat aḍiya</i>	- a version of the <i>bali</i> ritual with segment symbolizing seven steps taken by Prince Siddhartha at his birth.
<i>hat pada pelapāliya</i>	- ritual of seven dances
<i>hatara varam deviyo</i>	- Gods of Four Warrants
<i>horanāva</i>	- a conical-bore, quadruple-reed oboe
<i>illam</i>	- holes
<i>iraṭṭiya</i> (plural <i>iraṭṭi</i> )	- special ending pattern
<i>kaḍaturāva</i>	- curtain
<i>kaḍḍippuva</i> (pl. <i>kaḍḍippu</i> )	- stick
<i>kaḍinam</i>	- fast
<i>kaha diyara kotala</i>	- vessel of turmeric water
<i>kalaha</i>	- pot
<i>kālapaṇḍam padē</i>	- pattern specific to Torch of Time
<i>kālapandama</i>	- Torch of Time
<i>kalas biṇḍīma</i>	- breaking the pot
<i>Kalu Kumāra samayama</i>	- <i>tovil</i> ritual dedicated to the Kalu Kumāra demon
<i>kāṅgul padē</i>	- first movement of Devol patterns
<i>kannilam</i>	- filler strokes
<i>kanvaraya</i>	- woven loop that attaches the waist strap to the drum
<i>kap situvīma</i>	- planting a bough
<i>kapa</i>	- bough
<i>kāpai</i>	- it is done
<i>kāpīma</i>	- to cut
<i>kapu mahattaya</i>	- lay priests who communicate with the Gods
<i>kāpum hama</i>	- see <i>hākma</i>
<i>kaṭṭadi mahattaya</i>	- lay priests communicate with the demons
<i>kavi tāla</i>	- a specific type of slow patterns that display dancer's skills
<i>kavi</i>	- verses
<i>keṭi kavi</i>	- short verses
<i>keṭi yāḍini mātraya</i>	- short invocation beat
<i>kolam</i>	- Low-Country masked play
<i>kotal padē</i>	- pattern associated with the vessel of turmeric water
<i>koṭṭoruvā</i>	- official ritual assistant
<i>liyavīma</i>	- carving and shaping
<i>māḍiyama</i>	- Middle Watch
<i>maḍu</i>	- also known as <i>dēva sāntikaṛma</i> , <i>dēva tovil</i> type of communal outdoor rituals dedicate to the deities
<i>magul bera</i>	- auspicious drum pattern
<i>mahattaya</i>	- gentleman
<i>mal baliya</i>	- planetary ritual carried out for pregnant woman

<i>mal pūjāva</i>	- offering of flowers
<i>milla kāpīma</i>	- cutting of the <i>milla</i> tree
<i>mini geḍiya</i>	- small hand-held bell
<i>mōl gaha</i>	- pole used to crush starch
<i>mugura</i>	- spear
<i>namaskāra pada</i>	- worship pattern, especially associated with worshipping the instrument
<i>padē</i> (plural, <i>pada</i> )	- pattern
<i>pahata raṭa</i>	- Low-Country
<i>pañcatūrya nāda</i>	- classification system for Sri Lankan traditional musical instruments
<i>pañdam aḍi vaṭṭam</i>	- patterns specific to <i>sāndā samayama</i>
<i>pañdam pada</i>	- decorative patterns with torches
<i>pañdama</i>	- torch
<i>pidēni dīma</i>	- offering of fire
<i>pidēni taṭu</i>	- offerings for demons
<i>pin</i>	- acts of virtue
<i>pirit</i>	- Buddhist chanting ceremony
<i>pol mala</i>	- coconut flower
<i>porava</i>	- axe
<i>pūjā bera</i>	- solo drumming pattern played at the conclusion of a ritual
<i>pūjā</i>	- offering
<i>rabāna</i>	- frame drum
<i>śabdha</i>	- sound
<i>samayam, samayama</i>	- demon
<i>sāndā samayama</i>	- segment for the demons of the Evening Watch
<i>sanna</i>	- exposition, elucidation of the <i>stotra</i>
<i>sarala pada</i>	- short repetitive patterns
<i>saramba</i>	- exercises
<i>saudama</i>	- see <i>aḍauva</i>
<i>stotra</i>	- praise. Also known as <i>sloka</i> . Highly formalized verse or prose texts generally recited as thanks giving to the Three Jewels or the higher gods
<i>sural taṭṭuva</i>	- thinner drumhead
<i>surala</i> ( <i>sural</i> )	- drum roll. Also a name given to a specific type of technical pattern
<i>tammaṭṭama</i>	- vessel-shaped kettle drums
<i>tānam</i>	- a style of singing using sounds of <i>tā</i> and <i>nā</i>
<i>tel vādavīma</i>	- bringing in the oil
<i>telme</i>	- dance in honour of the Twelve Gods
<i>tit</i>	- a Sinhala drum theory associated with the Up-Country tradition
<i>toran yāgaya</i>	- segment in <i>devol maḍuva</i> ritual dedicated to the ceremonial archway
<i>torana</i>	- ceremonial archway

<i>tovil, yak tovil</i>	- type of ritual associated with demons
<i>uḍa raṭa</i>	- Up-Country
<i>uḍḍakkiya</i>	- hour glass shaped drum with variable tension
<i>vāṇḍum ata</i> (pl. <i>vāṇḍum at</i> )	- dance and drumming patterns using gestures of worship
<i>varapaṭa</i> (pl. <i>varapati</i> )	- straps along the body of the drum
<i>vas dōsa</i>	- minor witchcraft from the evil eye, mouth, and tongue
<i>vaṭṭam pada</i>	- patterns where dancer move in circles
<i>vaṭṭama</i> (plural, <i>vaṭṭam</i> )	- movement
<i>venivara</i>	- thinner version of <i>varapaṭa</i>
<i>viyat</i>	- length from the thumb to the little finger, as the fingers are spread
<i>yāḍini mātraya</i>	- invocation beat
<i>yahan dākma</i>	- pattern where dancers seek blessings from the deities
<i>yakā</i> (plural <i>yakku</i> )	- demon

### Appendix 3: Attaching the *Yak Beraya* to the Waist

A series of nine photographs presented below, illustrates one method of tying a knot, which enables the musician to hold the drum around their waist. In photograph 1, the left hand grips the strap at the *kanvaraya*, and this holds the drum temporarily. The right hand stretches the waist strap about a foot away, in order to create a triangular shaped loop. In photograph 2, the strap on the right hand is crossed over to the left hand. Photographs 3-7 illustrate the main knot. With the loop created, the section closest to the body is taken over and under the strap, through the remainder of the loop. The final two photographs show how the excess strap is used to make a simple knot over the top of the existing knot.



### Original letter written in Sinhala

ಇದರ ಅರ್ಥ ಎಂದರೆ ಪಂಕ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಪದಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ.

[illegible]

ಶ್ರೀ ಮಂಜುನಾಥ್ ಹಾಲ್ವಾಡ್, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು  
ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ  
ಶ್ರೀ. ಬಿ. ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ

Handwritten signature: *[Signature]*

03 July 2008

**Towards a Collaborative Performance between the West and the East**

Sumuditha Suraweera has gained a comprehensive training in Sri Lankan Low-Country drumming from artists belonging to a lineage of long-established traditional drummers and dancers. Prasantha Rupathilake and his family, who will be involved in this collaboration, are well respected traditional artists in Sri Lanka. For instance, Prasantha's father is a receiver of 'Kalābhūṣana' honours by His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka. Their skills and wisdom on traditional rituals of *tovil*, *bali* and *devol maḍu* are unprecedented. I consider that Sumuditha Suraweera was privileged, and quite lucky, to receive training and witness rituals performed by this (Rupathilake) family. Sumuditha had already studied Sri Lankan drumming for a number of years when he first came to me (Sandhoris Jayantha – a Low-Country drummer from the Raigama tradition). When I first met Sumuditha, his Low-Country drumming skills were found to be far ahead of his age. He studied with me for around three years and developed an in-depth knowledge of the tradition. Through our association, I have realized that Sumuditha Suraweera is highly talented and capable of synergising the sounds and musical configurations of the Low-Country with Western music. I thought about this matter deliberating for about three days and having realized that such a production by Sumuditha will do no harm whatsoever to our traditional art form, I approved of this collaborative project. Therefore, I consider it a great honour for the entire world of art, if Sumuditha Suraweera is provided all support and assistance in order to bring over at least three Western musicians of his calibre to Sri Lanka, for this project.

Signed:

G.S. Sandhoris Jayantha

Kalābhūṣana Presidential Honours  
Head of Sandhoris Institute of Traditional Art

## Appendix 5: Catalogue of Field Recordings

### Video (Low-Country)

- V.LC06.1 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Hokandara, disc 1
- V.LC06.2 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Hokandara, disc 2
- V.LC06.3 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Hokandara, disc 3
- V.LC06.4 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Hokandara, disc 4
- V.LC06.5 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Hokandara, disc 5
- V.LC06.6 - DVD, Sandhoris Jayantha playing basic exercises and *magul bera*
- V.LC06.7 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva*, Jayantha, Susantha and Daniel
- V.LC06.8 - DVD, *Parapuren Parapuraṭa* TV programme showcasing Jayantha
- V.LC06.9 - DVD, *Santuru Rangālaya* Low-Country concert, disc 1
- V.LC06.10 - DVD, *Santuru Rangālaya* Low-Country concert, disc 2
- V.LC06.11 - DVD, Sandhoris Jayantha's classes with his students
- V.LC07.12 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 1
- V.LC07.13 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 2
- V.LC07.14 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 3
- V.LC07.15 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 4
- V.LC07.16 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 5
- V.LC07.17 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 6
- V.LC07.18 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Bellanwilla, disc 7
- V.LC07.19 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Athurugiriya, disc 1
- V.LC07.20 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Athurugiriya, disc 2
- V.LC07.21 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Arangala, disc 1
- V.LC07.22 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* at Arangala, disc 2
- V.LC07.23 - DVD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 1
- V.LC07.24 - DVD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 2
- V.LC07.25 - DVD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 3
- V.LC07.26 - DVD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 4
- V.LC07.27 - DVD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 5
- V.LC07.28 - DVD, Kalu Kumāra *Samayama*, disc 1
- V.LC07.29 - DVD, Kalu Kumāra *Samayama*, disc 2
- V.LC07.30 - DVD, Kalu Kumāra *Samayama*, disc 3
- V.LC07.31 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 1
- V.LC07.32 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 2
- V.LC07.33 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 3
- V.LC07.34 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* workshop directed by Jayantha, disc 1
- V.LC07.35 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* workshop directed by Jayantha, disc 2
- V.LC07.36 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* workshop directed by Jayantha, disc 3
- V.LC07.37 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* workshop directed by Jayantha, disc 4
- V.LC08.38 - DVD, *Garā yākuma* ritual at Bellanwilla, disc 1
- V.LC08.39 - DVD, *Garā yākuma* ritual at Bellanwilla, disc 2
- V.LC08.40 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva* in Pannipitiya, disc 1
- V.LC08.41 - DVD, *Graha pūjāva* in Pannipitiya, disc 2
- V.LC08.42 - DVD, *Yak maḍuva* in Kadawatha, disc 1

- V.LC08.43 - DVD, *Devol maḍuva* in Arangala, disc 1
- V.LC09.44 - DVD, *Bera pōya hēvisi* at Bellanwilla, disc 1
- V.LC09.44 - DVD, *Mal baliya* ritual, disc 1
- V.LC09.45 - DVD, *Mal baliya* ritual, disc 2
- V.LC09.46 - DVD, *Mal baliya* ritual, disc 3

### Video (Up-Country)

- V.UC06.1 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 1
- V.UC06.2 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 2
- V.UC06.3 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 3
- V.UC06.4 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 4
- V.UC06.5 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 5
- V.UC06.6 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Mahanama College, disc 6
- V.UC06.8 - DVD, Up-Country *Ves* ceremony at Bellanwilla, disc 1
- V.UC06.9 - DVD, Up-Country *Ves* ceremony at Bellanwilla, disc 2
- V.UC06.10 - DVD, traditional music concert directed by Piyasara Shilpadhipathi
- V.UC06.11 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Kurunagala, disc 1
- V.UC06.12 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Kurunagala, disc 2
- V.UC06.13 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Kurunagala, disc 3
- V.UC06.14 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Kurunagala, disc 4
- V.UC06.15 - DVD, *Kohomba Kankāriya* at Kurunagala, disc 5

### Video (Sabaragamuwa)

- V.SB06.1 - DVD, Interviews with M.K.Babanis
- V.SB08.2 - DVD, *Bera pōya hēvisi* in Ratnapura, disc 1
- V.SB08.2 - DVD, *Bera pōya hēvisi* in Ratnapura, disc 2

### Audio

- A.UC06.1 - MD, *Ves* ceremony, disc 1
- A.UC06.2 - MD, *Ves* ceremony, disc 2
- A.UC06.4 - MD, Interview with Piyasara Shilpadhipathi
- A.UC06.5 - MD, Prasantha playing the *kandyan* drum
- A.UC06.6 - MD, Talks with Piyasara Shilpadhipathi
- A.SB06.7 - MD, Interviews with Sandhoris Jayantha and M.K Babanis
- A.SB06.8 - MD, Interviews with Sandhoris Jayantha and M.K Babanis
- A.SB06.9 - MD, Interviews with Sandhoris Jayantha and M.K Babanis
- A.LC06.10 - MD, Discussions and lessons with Sandhoris Jayantha
- A.LC06.11 - MD, Discussions and lessons with Sandhoris Jayantha
- A.LC06.12 - MD, *Graha pūjāva* Sandhoris Jayantha, Susantha and Daniel
- A.LC06.13 - MD, Kalu Kumāra *Samayama* at Vidyala Handiya
- A.LC07.14 - CD, Jayantha vocalising drumming patterns of *devol maḍuva*, disc 1
- A.LC07.15 - CD, Jayantha vocalising drumming patterns of *devol maḍuva*, disc 2
- A.LC07.16 - CD, Jayantha vocalising drumming patterns of *devol maḍuva*, disc 3



- A.LC07.17 - CD, Jayantha vocalising drumming patterns of *devol maḍuva*, disc 4
- A.LC07.18 - CD, Jayantha vocalising drumming patterns of *devol maḍuva*, disc 5
- A.LC07.19 - CD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 1
- A.LC07.20 - CD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 2
- A.LC07.21 - CD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 3
- A.LC07.22 - CD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 4
- A.LC07.23 - CD, *Hat aḍiya bali* ritual, Prasantha, Susathna and Daniel, disc 5
- A.LC07.24 - CD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 1
- A.LC07.25 - CD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 2
- A.LC07.26 - CD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 3
- A.LC07.27 - CD, *Graha pūjāva* in Horana, disc 4
- A.LC07.28 - CD, *Raṭa yākuma* in Galle, disc 1
- A.LC07.29 - CD, *Raṭa yākuma* in Galle, disc 2

## Appendix 6: Guide for Supplementary Video Examples of Rituals

Track	Pattern	Performers	Event/Description	Corresponding figures/tables in text
1	Drumming rudiments ( <i>saramba</i> )	Sandhoris	Performance on request at Jayantha's residence	figures 45, 44,55 and 57
2	<i>Ārambhaka pada-A</i>	Dancer: Lasantha Drummers led by Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya (special Pattini performance)	figure 60
3	<i>Ārambhaka pada-A</i>	Dancer: Valikala Drummer: Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya ( <i>milla kăpīma</i> ). This is a shortened, rushed version of the pattern.	figure 60
4	<i>Sarala pada-D</i>	Dancer: Valikala Drummer: Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya ( <i>milla kăpīma</i> )	figure 61
5	<i>Sarala pada- B1</i> and <i>Sarala pada- B2</i>	Dancer: Valikala Drummer: Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya ( <i>milla kăpīma</i> )	figure 62
6	<i>Vāṇḍum ata -A</i>	Dancer: Narangala Drummers led by Narangoda	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Arangala near Jayantha's residence ( <i>tel vāḍavavīma</i> )	figure 63
7	<i>Vaṭṭam pada-A</i>	Dancer: Narangala Drummers led by Narangoda	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Arangala ( <i>tel vāḍavavīma</i> )	figure 65
8	<i>Sarala pada-A</i>	Dancers led by Sedaraman. Drummers led by Narangoda	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Arangala residence ( <i>tel vāḍavavīma</i> )	figure 67
9	<i>Yahan dākma - first vaṭṭama</i>	Dancer: Lasantha Drummers led by Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya (special Pattini performance)	figure 69

10	<i>Yahan dākma</i> - first <i>vaṭṭama</i>	Dancer: Saman Drummers: Prasantha and Ajith	<i>Garā yākuma</i> at Bellanwilla	figure 69
11	<i>Sarala pada-B4</i> ( <i>gaman tālaya</i> )	Dancers: Lasantha, Saman and Jayantha Drummers led by Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla ( <i>sāndā samayama</i> )	figure 70
12	Basic pattern of <i>kotal padē</i> and <i>dummala padē</i>	Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Hokandara (cleansing and incensing the ritual arena)	figure 71
13	Ending ( <i>hamāre</i> ) of <i>kotal padē</i> basic pattern	Drummers led by Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla (cleansing and incensing the ritual arena)	figure 72
14	<i>Kotal padē</i> second <i>surala</i>	Dancer: Lasantha Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop (Pattini)	figure 74
15	<i>Ārambhaka pada-D</i>	Dancers: Mahilal Drummers led by Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla ( <i>pidēni dīma</i> )	figure 76
16	The <i>kālapaṇḍama padē</i>	Drummers led by Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla ( <i>kālapaṇḍam</i> segment)	figure 77
17	<i>Sarala pada-C</i>	Dancers led by Sedaraman. Drummers led by Narangoda	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Arangala ( <i>tel vāḍavavīma</i> )	figure 78
18	<i>Paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam-2</i> and <i>Paṇḍam aḍi vaṭṭam-3</i>	Dancers: Saman, Lasantha and Jayantha Drummers led by Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla ( <i>sāndā samayama</i> )	figure 79
19	<i>Kavi tāla-E</i> and short bridging phrase for <i>kavi tāla-E</i>	Dancer: Jayantha Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop ( <i>bisō kapa</i> )	figure 83

20	<i>Vāṇḍum ata-E</i>	Dancer: Jayantha Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop ( <i>bisō kapa</i> )	figure 84
21	<i>Kavi tāla-A</i>	Dancers led by Jayantha Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop ( <i>toran yāgaya</i> )	figure 85
22	<i>Kavi tāla-B</i>	Dancers led by Jayantha Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop ( <i>toran yāgaya</i> )	figure 92
23	<i>Pattini pada 1</i>	Dancer: Lasantha Drummer: Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop (Pattini)	figure 103
24	<i>Pattini pada 1 - surala</i>	Dancer: Lasantha Drummer: Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> workshop (Pattini)	figure 104
25	<i>Pattini saudama</i>	Sandhoris	Performance on request at Jayantha's residence	table 3
26	<i>Tēvā pada</i>	Dancer: Valikala Drummers led by Ajith	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Hokandara (Pattini)	figure 155
27	<i>Magul bera vaṭṭam 1-3</i>	Sandhoris	Performance on request at Jayantha's residence	figures 106, 107 and 108
28	<i>Magul bera extensions</i>	Drummers led by Sandhoris	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Homagama (extracted from archived recording with permission)	n/a
29	<i>Magul bera shorter version</i>	Ajith and Premadasa	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla	n/a
30	Acrobatic performance	Guest performers	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> in Arangala, organized by Lasantha ( <i>telme</i> )	n/a
31	<i>Ārambhaka pada-D</i> in Vāhala segment	Dancer: Channa Drummers led by Sugath	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Bellanwilla (Vāhala). This video also shows the use of the cue with the <i>akṣara dom</i>	figure 109

32	<i>Kāṅgul padē</i> ( <i>Devol pada</i> movement 1)	Drummers led by Premadasa Dancers led by Jayantha	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya (Devol. This is a special performance where the dancers perform on an altar known as the <i>geḍige</i> . Usually this is done on the ground )	figure 110
33	<i>Devol pada</i> movement 2	Drummers led by Premadasa Dancers led by Jayantha	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya	figure 111
34	<i>Devol pada</i> movement 3	Drummers led by Premadasa Dancers led by Jayantha	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya	figure 112
35	<i>Devol pada</i> movement 5	Drummers led by Premadasa Dancers led by Jayantha	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya	figure 113
36	<i>Devol vāṇḍum</i> <i>ata</i> (vāṇḍum <i>ata</i> - F)	Drummers led by Premadasa Dancers led by Jayantha	<i>Devol maḍuva</i> at Athurugiriya	figure 114
37	The <i>pūjā bera</i> pattern	Sandhoris	<i>Graha pūjāva</i> in Horana	figure 115
38	<i>Vaṭṭam pada</i> -B	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 117
39	<i>Tovil</i> pattern-A	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 118
40	<i>Sarala pada</i> -D embellishment	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 119
41	Improvisation on <i>sarala pada</i> -C in <i>tovil</i> ritual	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 120
42	<i>Yak panti</i> pattern	Drummer: Prasantha Dancer: Daniel	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 121

43	<i>Paṇḍam pada-D</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 122
44	Pattern danced with a king- coconut in the <i>hat pada</i> <i>pelapāliya</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 123
45	Pattern danced with a live rooster in the <i>hat</i> <i>pada pelapāliya</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 124
46	Pattern danced with a shawl in the <i>hat pada</i> <i>pelapāliya</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 125
47	Pattern featuring hand claps in the <i>hat pada</i> <i>pelapāliya</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 126
48	Prasantha's embellishment of <i>yāḍini mātraya</i>	Dancer: Daniel Drummer: Prasantha	Kalu Kumāra <i>samayama</i> in Pannipitiya	figure 127
49	<i>Bali</i> pattern-D	Dancers: Daniel and Susantha Drummer: Prasantha	<i>Hat aḍiya bali</i> ritual at a residence in Rajagiriya	figure 143
50	Transition pattern-C	Dancer: Daniel and Susantha Drummer: Prasantha	<i>Hat aḍiya bali</i> ritual at a residence in Rajagiriya	figure 144
51	Improvisation in <i>bali</i> pattern-E	Dancer: Daniel and Susantha Drummer: Prasantha	<i>Mal baliya</i> ritual, at a residence in Pannipitiya	figure 146

## Appendix 7: Guide for Supplementary Audio Examples of Rituals

Track	Performers	Pattern	Corresponding figure in text
1	Drummer: Prasantha Dancers: Daniel and Susantha	<i>Bali</i> pattern-A and embellishment	figure 130
2	Drummer: Prasantha Dancers: Daniel and Susantha	Transition pattern-A	figure 131
3	Drummer: Prasantha Dancers: Daniel and Susantha	<i>Bali</i> pattern-B improvisation (2 verses)	figures 134 and 135
4	Drummer: Daniel Dancers: Prasantha and Susantha	<i>Bali</i> pattern-B improvisation (2 verses)	figures 136 and 137
5	Drummer: Susantha Dancers: Daniel	<i>Bali</i> pattern-B improvisation (verse 1)	figure 138
6	Drummer: Susantha Dancers: Daniel	<i>Bali</i> pattern-B improvisation (verse 2)	figure 139
7	Drummer: Prasantha Dancers: Daniel and Susantha	Transition pattern-B	figure 140
8	Drummer: Prasantha Dancers: Daniel and Susantha	<i>Bali</i> pattern-C and embellishment	figure 142
9	Drummer: Daniel Dancers: Prasantha and Susantha	<i>Bali</i> pattern E	figure 146
10	Drummer: Susantha Dancers: Daniel	<i>Bali</i> pattern-H and embellishment	figure 147

## Appendix 8: Letter of Human Ethics Approval



HEC Ref: 2006/108

5 October 2006

Sumuditha Suraweera  
Music  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Sumuditha

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal "Comparative Study of High and Low Country Drumming in Sri Lanka" has been considered and approved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Dr. Wendy'.

Dr Alison Loveridge  
*Chair, Human Ethics Committee*